

***Quick Updates*** ***from*** ***Your HF Team***

***USFS, Federation and Partners Launch Carbon Data Initiative***

On February 9, the Hardwood Federation entered a [Memorandum of Agreement](https://hardwoodfederation.wildapricot.org/resources/Documents/MMRV_Platform_MOA_Executed_%202-9-2024.pdf) with the USFS and other industry partners, formally launching a partnership devoted to development of a digital platform that will estimate the carbon footprint of the wood products and forestry sectors. The Federation pledges to provide technical assistance and perspectives unique to hardwood sawmills in the development of the project. The agreement will support industry efforts to gain federal recognition of the environmental benefits of hardwood products, one of the industry’s top issues.

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***House Sub-Committee Reviews Problematic Wood Products Import Bill***

On February 14, the House Subcommittee on Wildlife and Fisheries reviewed a host of bills, including [H.R. 7157](https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.congress.gov%2F118%2Fbills%2Fhr7157%2FBILLS-118hr7157ih.pdf&data=05%7C02%7CBryan.Brendle%40hardwoodfederation.com%7Cbedff12d17e145b7e68808dc2d861b21%7C21432cc7b4084b2d92409f556e3dd6cb%7C0%7C0%7C638435301222478739%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=CVkY7TzUDBVS8rUxHYLJ53nrv3bFZSZKvFHDRgXZ%2FXQ%3D&reserved=0), legislation that would alter procedures for enforcing the Lacey Act, an industry-supported law to prevent import and reduce demand for illegally sourced wood products and has bolstered the domestic manufacturing sector.  Although the sponsors assert that the bill, as currently written, would establish regulatory certainty in processing timber imports, the significantly condensed timelines for review and lack of federal resources to fund new processes would weaken the ability to strictly enforce provisions of the Lacey Act. A Senate companion, [S. 3143](https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.congress.gov%2Fbill%2F118th-congress%2Fsenate-bill%2F3143%2Fcosponsors%3Fs%3D1%26r%3D51&data=05%7C02%7CBryan.Brendle%40hardwoodfederation.com%7Cbedff12d17e145b7e68808dc2d861b21%7C21432cc7b4084b2d92409f556e3dd6cb%7C0%7C0%7C638435301222485804%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=nWlNMT0iQEM9h0GWDaFt56wP6z1OEvu9hHZelLDbn2I%3D&reserved=0), has also been introduced (co-sponsored by three Republican Senators)  and referred to committee but has no support from the Democrat majority or seen any additional action at this time.

***USFS Study Confirms Top Threats to Old Growth***

Underscoring industry advocacy on a range of regulatory issues, from defining mature and old growth forests to pushing back on tighter air quality standards from EPA, the USFS has released a [study](https://www.fs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/fs_media/fs_document/MOG-Threats-Intro.pdf) showing that wildfires and disease top the list of threats for old growth forests. As with previous studies, the report shows that “70 to 80 percent of mature and old growth forests are at high [risk] to wildfire-caused mortality.” The report goes on to point out that disease and insect infestation wipe out millions of more acres under federal management, including “1.86 million acres of mature and 182,000 acres of old growth.”

***Mark Your Calendar Today!*** The Hardwood Federation has scheduled ***Fly-In 2024 for Tuesday, May 21 to Thursday, May 23.*** Save the dates and come to Washington to make your voice heard on Capitol Hill! Stay tuned for details related to registration information and Fly-In agenda.