

Hardwood Federation Announces Top 2017 Priorities

By Dana Cole

For the first time in recent memory blizzard conditions somewhere in the United States did not stop participants from attending the Hardwood Federation's Board of Directors and Hardwood Federation PAC Board of Directors annual winter meetings in Washington Feb. 15-16. We had excellent discussions, both formal and informal, and the staff received excellent direction for 2017.

The primary focus of the winter meeting is to set the direction and priorities of the Federation for the year. Using the guidance of 2016 advocacy activity, the anticipated Administration agenda, and the responses to the annual Hardwood Federation Priority Policy Survey, the Hardwood Federation and Hardwood Federation PAC Boards discussed and set a course of action for 2017.

Of course, the ever-changing world of politics and policy can shift some of this course, but to have marching orders at the start of every year greatly helps the Hardwood Federation staff provide the best possible assistance to the hardwood industry.

In 2017, the top issues reported by the survey fell in line with our expected chief priorities: federal forest management, regulatory reform, tax reform, trade and biomass.

These are not new topics for the Federation, but the high level of importance placed on them by those who responded to the survey is a clear mandate for us.

Congress will continue to hear from us why it is important that the right decisions are made when considering reform measures in these areas. They will also hear from us why the wrong decisions can devastate our industry.

Of course, our efforts on Capitol Hill will not be limited to these five issues; green building programs, the Lacey Act, the Endangered Species Act and export market issues, among others, will all continue to command some of our attention. This year will no doubt be a busy one.

The Board of Directors held a lengthy discussion about how the Hardwood Federation can best position itself on the issue of trade, particularly within the context of the new Administration.

On the campaign trail and early in the 2017 various policy positions were floated regarding U.S. agreements and practices with our trading partners, including the North American Free Trade Agreement countries of Mexico and Canada, China and Europe.

As an industry that benefits greatly from export markets and one that also suffers from unfair competition from hardwood imports, there was a lot to discuss.

The board started with the premise that the Hardwood Federation advocates for fair, legal and free trade.

Although we are still fine tuning our specific, final policy guidelines, it is safe to say that the Hardwood Federation will be working with the Administration and with Congress to communicate both sides of this matter and to advise them that trade is an extremely complicated issue that cannot be

adequately addressed with "one-size-fits-all" national policy. No doubt this will be a difficult issue for the Hardwood industry... and for many other industry sectors...to deal with.

But it is one that is critical to our industry and we are prepared to work strategically with hardwood companies and our supporters in Congress to realize a satisfactory outcome.

If you have any thoughts or comments on issues affecting your business please do not hesitate to contact us at hardwood.federation@hardwoodfederation.com. ■



Dana Cole, dana.cole@hardwoodfederation.com, is executive director of the Hardwood Federation, which serves as the voice of 28 associations dedicated to promoting and supporting the hardwood industry.

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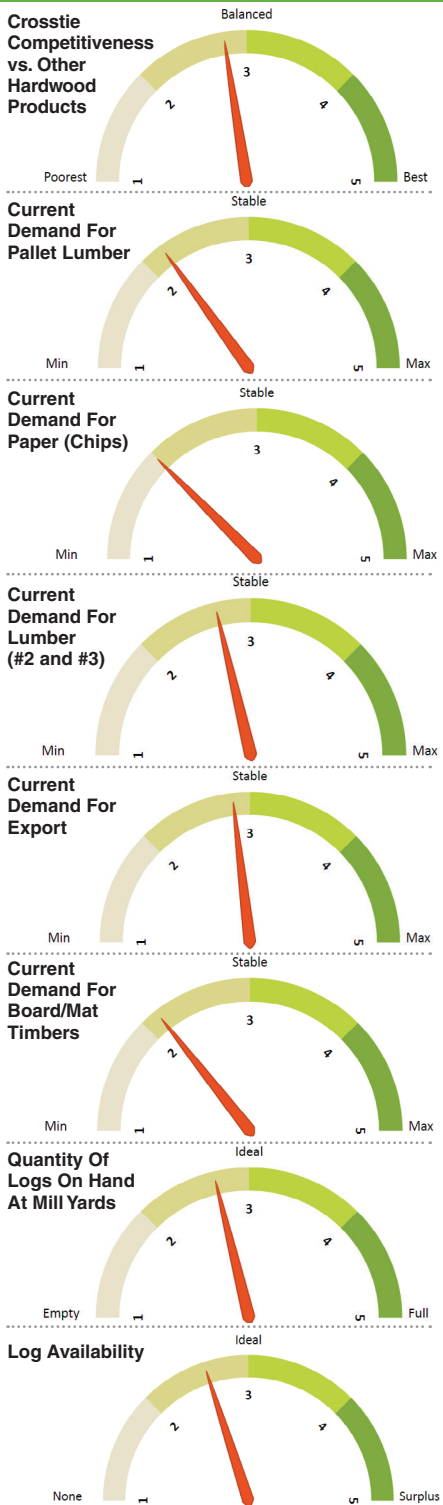
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Hardwood Procurement Trends Eastern Half U.S. – April 2017

The gauges below represent "snapshot in time" opinions of in-the-field wood tie buyers who procure untreated crossties from sawmills in their regions. RTA does not warrant nor accept responsibility for the accuracy of the data generated. See more on rtastats.org.



Zwicky Processing & Recycling: Converting 'Waste' Into Clean-Burning Biomass

By Paige Townley



Zwicky Processing & Recycling (ZPR) doesn't believe in the word "waste." In fact, the entire business is built around the ability to convert "waste" into useful, beneficial products.

"Our company motto is 'recycle today for a better tomorrow for all of us,'" said company founder Dave Zwicky. "We are focused on being a 100-percent recycling and processing operation."

Zwicky started the company more than 60 years ago. In 1952, he got his first bank loan, bought a backhoe and began performing excavation work for farmers in eastern Pennsylvania. "The company evolved as we tried to figure out better ways to work," Zwicky said. "Our idea was to try to do more positive things with items and materials that were considered waste. It just kept evolving into where we are now."

What started as a small company has grown into a more than 60-employee, multi-faceted business that helps customers save landfill space by providing a fuel resource from "waste."

The company focuses specifically on converting construction and demolition wastes; municipal and residual wastes, single source as well as source separated material; materials from sources like transfer stations, contractors, industrial and manufacturing operations; and other wood products like utility poles and railroad ties.

ZPR converts these materials into clean burning biomass fuel that end-use customers utilize to generate electrical energy and

produce heat for various manufacturing processes. "Our permits are designed in a way that when materials arrive, we take ownership and it becomes de-wasted through our process, requiring no third-party involvement," Zwicky said. "We basically have no limits on our capacity of waste materials that we can have on site; we can take an unlimited amount of material."

The company manages its large-scaled operation on a 140-plus acre site, which includes a fully permitted facility and state-of-the-art technology. ZPR meets LEED certifications and has the ability to salvage almost 100 percent of the materials it processes into beneficial use. "We literally convert some of the country's toughest wastes into fuels that are moving America toward long-sought energy independence," Zwicky said. "We make the most of waste materials in an environmentally friendly way."

ZPR's ability to produce so effectively is also thanks to its highly trained staff, many of whom have worked there for many years. "Everyone here has a real vested interest in where we are going and what we are doing. And no one here is afraid of a challenge or trying new ideas."

While finding better ways to recycle and reduce waste is not always easy, the company continues to take on the challenge. "The need for material disposal and recycling is great, and we can fulfill that need for customers," Zwicky said. "We're looking to expand our operation to increase our capacity. It's rewarding to know that we are maximizing the use and value of waste products." ■

Industry Briefs

Legislation Would Aid Development Of Tall Timber Buildings

The U.S. Senate and House of Representatives in mid-March tabled a piece of bipartisan legislation that would further the development of tall timber buildings in the United States, thereby supporting the nation's timber market.

Called the Timber Innovation Act, it would:

- Establish a performance-driven research and development program for advancing tall wood building construction in the United States;
- Authorize the Tall Wood Building Prize Competition through the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) annually for the next five years;
- Create federal grants to support state, local, university and private sector education, outreach, research and development, including education and assistance for architects and builders, that would accelerate the use of wood in tall buildings;
- Authorize technical assistance from USDA, in cooperation with state foresters and state extension directors (or equivalent state officials), to implement a program of education and technical assistance for mass timber applications; and
- Incentivize the retrofitting of existing facilities located in areas with high unemployment rates, to spur job creation in rural areas.

Trees Outnumber People 300:1

According to a report by the Woodworking Network, trees outnumber people 300 to 1 in the United States, with woodlands covering one-third of the country in the U.S. Forest Service's latest census.

Only trees at least five inches in diameter are counted in the U.S. Forest Service Forest Inventory and Analysis National Program, which has continuously counted the forest population since 1930.

An acre with at least 10 percent tree canopy qualifies as a forest for purposes



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of the census, reported Jo Craven McGinty in the *Wall Street Journal*. Dennis May, a U.S. Forest Service program manager, tells McGinty the census was established to answer the question, "Are we wisely using the forest without impacting its health, condition and stature?"

The U.S. exported \$8.7 billion in forest products in 2016—lumber, paper, logs, veneer, pulp, wood pellets, case goods and other items—putting the sector right up there with soy beans and corn.

For purposes of the survey, sample areas are surveyed each year, and

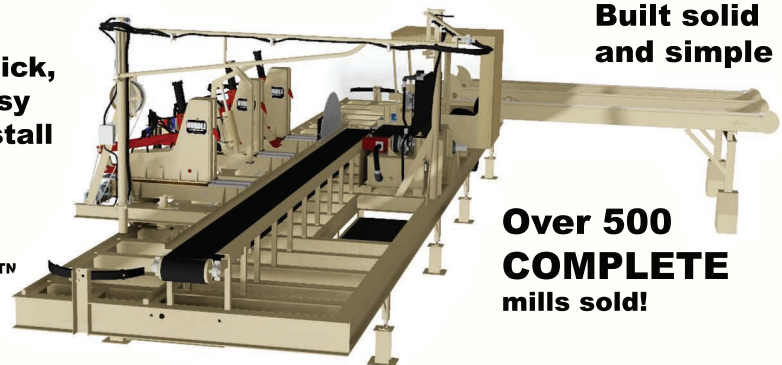
data is projected to get totals.

The Forest Inventory and Analysis National program—which has extensive data at its website—received \$75 million to carry on its count last year. Each state's forest is summarized annually, and a comprehensive report is produced in five-year intervals.

McGinty reported that in the South, long-leaf and slash pines are in decline, but overall the forests are stable, though she did not mention the effects of highly visible challenges such as the emerald ash borer, walnut blight or oak wilt. ■

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