Zombie Trees: USFS Wood Utilization Grants Target The Standing Dead

Cover Photo credit and Zombie tree theme: Oregon Forest Resource Institute

Panama Canal Expansion Will Reduce West Coast Port Arrivals

WPA Member Companies in the News:
- Commercial Lumber and Pallet
- Konecny Brothers
- Westside Pallet
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North American Softwood Prices

Weekly softwood lumber prices to November 17, 2015 are shown below, sourced at http://www.nrcan.gc.ca/forests/industry/13309.

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**Upcoming Events**

1/15/2016-1/19/2016
WPA Annual Meeting
Rancho Mirage, California
www.westernpallet.org

2/9/2016
WestPack
Anaheim, California
www.westpack.packagingdigest.com

NWPCA Annual Leadership Conference
Orlando, Florida
www.palletcentral.com

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**New Members**

The WPA is pleased to introduce the following new members:

Richard Berry
Berry Pallets, Inc.
807 North Craig Street
Janesville, MN 56093
ph: (507)835-5056
web: www.berrypallets.com
email: general@berrypallets.com
sponsor: Kathleen Dietrich, Commerical Lumber and Pallet

Max Jones
MJ Forest Products
5296 David court
Linden, CA 95236
ph: (209)887-2000
web: www.mjforestproducts.com
email: max@mjforestproducts.com
sponsor: Mark Berger, American Pallet
WPA in the News

Commercial Lumber and Pallet Company Offers Sustainable SFI Material

(City of Industry, California) As part of its broad commitment to corporate social responsibility, Commercial Lumber and Pallet Company announced today it will meet Sustainable Forestry Initiative© (SFI) lumber sourcing requirements across its City of Industry and Beaumont locations.

The SFI certified sourcing label tells consumers at least two-thirds of Commercial Lumber and Pallet Company’s lumber comes from a company certified to the procurement requirements of the SFI 2015-2020 Standard, a third party certified forest and/or from pre- or post-consumer recycled sources. There is also a risk assessment of any raw material from outside of North America to avoid controversial sources such as illegal logging operations.

“We know our customers care about how forests are managed,” states Ray Gutierrez, President-CEO of Commercial Lumber and Pallet Company. “SFI certified sourcing tells them our products are made with fiber from responsible sources—and our procurement practices are third party audited. With SFI certified sourcing, Commercial Lumber and Pallet Company, and our customers, can show we support improved forestry practices and strong communities throughout North America.”
Through its certified sourcing, the independent, non-profit SFI program stands apart from other certification programs by addressing the fact that 90 percent of the world’s forests are not certified. An SFI certified sourcing label tells consumers that lumber in a product is from legal and responsible sources, regardless of whether the forest is certified.

“By achieving SFI Fiber Sourcing requirements, Commercial Lumber and Pallet Company joins more than 245 companies that meet the mandatory practice requirements for the responsible procurement of all fiber sourced directly from the forest, whether the forest is certified or not. Among other requirements, SFI Fiber Sourcing includes measures to broaden biodiversity, use Best Management Practices to protect water quality, invest in forest-related research and conduct landowner outreach,” says Kathy Abusow, President and CEO of SFI Inc.

Commercial Lumber and Pallet Company was established in 1941. They manufacture and recycle new and used wooden pallets. They have two locations, City of Industry and Beaumont, California.

SFI Inc. is an independent 501c (3) nonprofit charitable organization, and is solely responsible for maintaining, overseeing and improving the internationally recognized Sustainable Forestry Initiative.

Across North America, more than 195 million acres are certified to the SFI forest management standard, making it the largest single forest standard in the world. SFI chain-of-custody certification tells buyers the percentage of lumber from certified forests, certified sourcing, and/or post-consumer recycled content.

Certified Wood Usage Has Trended Upward for Olympic Games, But Tokyo 2020 Uncertain

The Olympics started using certified wood products in 2010 at the Winter Olympics in Vancouver, BC. More than half of all wood products used were certified by PEFC (The Program for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes) or the Forest Stewardship Council. In the 2012 Olympics in London, 95–100 percent of the 12,500 cubic meters of wood used was certified. PEFC Asia is recommending the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo continue the trend of using certified wood products, but has not yet received a response to a letter it sent to the IOC in June.
WPA in the News

Westside Pallet Featured in Local Publication

Another WPA-member company is the news. This time it is Westside Pallet of Newman, California, which was the topic of this business success story.

The company vice president, Carolyn Beach-Skinner, is well known to WPA members for years of service to the WPA, and currently as the Association’s president. In the story, she credits the WPA for allowing her the opportunity to build a strong network of connections and helping her to keep abreast of key industry issues. Sounds like a logical idea for attending the 2016 WPA Annual Meeting. Check out the list of speakers below, and to register online, follow this link.

2016 WPA Annual Meeting Update

Preparations are well in hand for the upcoming 2016 WPA Annual Meeting, to be held in Rancho Mirage, California, January 15 - 19, 2016. Online registration is available. Rooms at Rancho Las Palmas are all but gone, so do not delay.

Speakers for the 2016 Annual Meeting include:
Patrick Atagi: NWPCA:
NWPCA, WPA and You - Working Together Works
Leanne Seeger, Hub International:
How Tech is Changing the Landscape of Employee Benefits
Lori Collins, Sierra Pacific:
Lumber Supply
Chaille Brindley, Pallet Enterprise:
Lean, Mean, Fighting Machine
Ralph Rupert, Millwood, Inc:
Pallet Quality in the 21st Century
Members in the News

Tyrone Konecny Featured in Customer Service Feature

“When you are selling a product such as wood,” stated Tyrone Konecny in a recent Pallet Enterprise article, “people have a ton of choices. You really need to stand out in some way.” Konecny, vice president of Konecny Brothers Lumber Company, Ogden, Utah, and associate director of the Western Pallet Association, was featured in a November issue story, "It's Not What You Say When It Comes to Great Customer Service." To read the story, click here.

One of the key themes of the article is that customers are less likely than ever to believe "how great you are" and as a result, your emphasis should be to create a great customer experience that results in enthusiastic endorsements from them. Another cautionary note from exports, is that in business to business selling, vendors can underestimate the importance of personal relationships. People buy from people they trust.

Konecny also emphasized the importance of providing great customer service and followup after the sale. “If you are going to be late on a delivery, it is important to notify the customer as soon as possible,” Konecny stressed.

The article also featured Gil Covey of Unit Pallet Ltd., a leading UK pallet company.
Forest Service Offers $5 Million Nationally in Grants

Dealing with "The Standing Dead." USFS Seeks to Expand Wood Product Markets, Supporting Job Creation and Reducing Wildfire Threat

Cheap plays on the television series The Walking Dead aside, removal of standing deadwood is a very serious issue. With this in mind, the U.S. Forest Service is seeking proposals for projects to expand wood energy and wood products markets that support sustainable forest management, especially in areas with high wildfire risks. While grants are not made for equipment purchase or plant expansion, there may be projects of interest to pallet companies that can help boost demand for low grade timber from public lands. This might include, for example, engineering design work that can enable greater consumption of low grade timber, or marketing plans designed to create or boost wood product sales. The most favorable proposals will be those that most immediately translate into creating more demand for low grade timber.

"Forests on public and private lands face an increasing threat of catastrophic wildfires as vegetative fuels build to unprecedented levels," said Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell in announcing the 2016 program. "The grants provided through this program not only help reduce hazardous fuels and improve forest health, but also create jobs to promote economic vitality in our communities."

For Fiscal Year 2016, the program will invest up to $5 million in projects designed to have a long-term impact on the National Forest System and other forested lands by leveraging the market for low value wood. Grants will be made through the agency’s Wood Innovations program. Maximum grants available for individual projects will be $250,000, with a minimum of $50,000. The grant can cover up to 65 percent of the cost of a project. In other words, a $100,000 project that is accepted would be awarded $65,000, with the remaining $35,000 to be covered by the applicant.
One particular area of opportunity for low grade material will be in California. Larry Swan of the Forest Service anticipates that a lot of timber between Sacramento and Bakersfield will be available, particularly pine and white fir. Unlike the often tapered (broad base and narrowing quickly) timber offered previously, this is taller timber which normally would recover higher grades. Unfortunately it will not be recovered in time to avoid blue stain.

The best proposals, Swan emphasizes, will be those that create utilization for this timber or of other timber from public lands. It is recommended, but not required, that proposed projects should be related to some use of public timber. Be sure to answer all of the questions in the application, he advises. A webinar will be held Continuing on Page 14.

"Forest and private lands face an increasing threat of catastrophic wildfires as vegetative fuels build to unprecedented levels," said Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell.
Wood Utilization Grants (Cont'd)

Continued from Page 13.
in the next few weeks for California applicants, but interested parties from other regions are welcome to listen. The application deadline is January 13, 2016.

Anyone with ideas are welcomed to bounce them off of their regional U.S. Forest Service representative:

**Forest Service Region 1 (MT, ND, Northern ID, & Northwestern SD)** Mike Dudley: mdudley@fs.fed.us (801) 625-5253

**Forest Service Region 2 (CO, KS, NE, SD, & WY)** Mike Eckhoff: mike.eckhoff@colostate.edu (970) 219-2140

**Forest Service Region 3 (AZ & NM)** Buck Sanchez: bsanchez@fs.fed.us (505) 842-3498

**Forest Service Region 4 (Southern ID, NV, UT, & Western WY)** Mike Dudley: mdudley@fs.fed.us (801) 625-5253

**Forest Service Region 5 (CA, HI, Guam, and Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands)** Larry Swan: lswan01@fs.fed.us (707) 562-8917

**Forest Service Region 6 (OR & WA)** Ron Saranich: rsaranich@fs.fed.us (503) 808-2346

**Forest Service Region 10 (Alaska)** Daniel Parrent: djparrent@fs.fed.us (907) 743-9467


Since 2005, more than 200 grants have been awarded to small businesses, non-profits, Tribes, States, and local governments to improve forest health while creating jobs, renewable energy and healthy communities. Since 2013, this funding has also helped establish 20 Statewide Wood Energy Teams and five Statewide Wood Utilization Teams that collectively expand and support wood energy and wood products markets.

The deadline for proposals is Jan. 13, 2016. Information on how to apply is available in the Federal Register Notice.

*More on Zombie Trees, see Page 16.*
The Effect of the Export Wood Pellet Industry on Forests, Industry Is Small, Says Report

What’s the bottom line on the wood pellet export controversy? Environmental activists proclaim this practice is threatening both forests in the U.S. South and traditional forest products businesses. Supporters argue that new markets for wood encourage landowners to replant after harvest, therefore increasing the number of forested acres in the region. To date, there has been little science-based research available that would help dislodge this debate and clarify the effects that the export wood pellet industry has had on forests and industry in the South.

Forest2Market, an independent group of forest analysts, recently conducted a study to quantify these effects. Commissioned by the U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities, the National Alliance of Forest Owners and the U.S. Industrial Pellet Association, this study—Wood Supply Market Trends in the US South: 1995-2015—shows that fears the export pellet industry is harming either the forests or forest products industries are unfounded. Data shows that pulpwood harvests for export pellet facilities are a small fraction of overall harvests when compared to harvests for non-pellet facilities and will likely remain relatively small in the future taking into consideration realistic estimates of future export removals.

In 2014, the total removal of wood in the U.S. South for all markets was 3.3% of the total forest inventory.

Analysis: Millions of 'zombie trees' in national forests

Meet the standing dead. Millions of ghosts charred by fire, ravaged by insects, or dead of thirst.

These are Oregon's "zombie" trees. And according to an analysis commissioned by the Oregon Forest Resources Institute, more than 350 million are standing dead in the 14 million acres of Oregon's national forests (an infographic and high-resolution photos of insect-killed trees in the Deschutes National Forest are available on OFRI's website).

"It's a tale of two forests," says Mike Cloughesy, OFRI's director of forestry. "About 17 percent of the trees on National Forest System lands in Oregon are dead, compared to 11 percent for other public lands, and 8 percent for private and Indian lands.

"While it may not seem scary, it's a potential nightmare because there's a lot more NFS land."

About half of Oregon is forested. Ownership is dominated by the federal government, with about 60 percent of the state's forestland. The National Forest System is the largest class with 48 percent – more than 14 million acres. Bureau of Land Management and other federal lands comprise 12 percent. Private and Native American ownership account for 36 percent, with state and local government ownership at 4 percent.

The analysis was prepared for OFRI by Tom Montzka, an independent forest analyst, using data from the U.S. Forest Service's Forest Inventory and Analysis Program.

Trees are one measure; volume is another. And the timber volume represented by the dead trees is startling. The analysis shows that standing-dead volume on NFS forestland is equivalent to more than half the live volume on other federal ownerships, such as BLM.

One reason for the situation, Cloughesy says, is a lack of active forest management.

"Actively managed forests have fewer dead trees," he says. Unmanaged forests become overcrowded as trees grow and new ones sprout. As forests become clogged with growth, the trees fall prey to insects and drought, and die. In a managed forest, many trees are thinned before they die.

"Dead trees fuel wildfires," Cloughesy says. "Overcrowded forests burn..."
"Dead trees fuel wildfires," Cloughesy says. "Overcrowded forests burn uncharacteristically hot, killing most trees and putting other resources such as watersheds and wildlife at risk."

One solution, Cloughesy says, is to increase harvest on federal lands.

"On federally managed lands, annual mortality exceeds harvest, so even a small increase in harvest would help," he notes. The analysis shows that on NFS lands open to harvest, annual mortality exceeds harvest by more than 400 percent.

Cloughesy states that from an ecological perspective, standing-dead and fallen timber provide a number of benefits, including fish and wildlife habitat, carbon storage and, as the trees decompose, soil nutrients. But the alarmingly high number of dead trees create a fire risk that could outweigh these benefits.

"Preventing a zombie apocalypse will require a much stronger commitment to active forest management on federal lands," he says. "It may not be comfortable, but the alternative could be much worse."

The Oregon Forest Resources Institute is a public agency.
Sierra Pacific commits $6 million to OSU Advanced Wood Products Laboratory

CORVALLIS, Ore. — Sierra Pacific Industries, one of the largest lumber producers in the United States, has committed $6 million to the College of Forestry at Oregon State University to support construction of an advanced wood products laboratory.

The project is part of OSU’s Oregon Forest Science Complex initiative, which will create a new home for the college on campus.

In the 20,000-square-foot laboratory, faculty and students will develop products like cross-laminated timber - the engineered wood panels at the center of growing global interest in substituting wood for steel and concrete in high-rise buildings.

California-based Sierra Pacific Industries is a third-generation, family-owned forest products company founded by A. A. “Red” Emmerson and his father, R. H. “Curly” Emmerson. In recognition of Sierra Pacific’s investment, the advanced wood products laboratory at OSU will be named in Red Emmerson’s honor.

Red Emmerson’s sons George Emmerson – who graduated from Oregon State in 1978 – and Mark Emmerson, a graduate of the University of California/Berkeley, lead the company as president and chairman/chief financial officer, respectively. Their sister Carolyn Emmerson Dietz, a 1982 OSU alumna, is president of the Sierra Pacific Foundation.

“We are extremely pleased to be associated with OSU’s Advanced Wood Products Laboratory,” George Emmerson said. “Sierra Pacific Industries has grown dramatically in the past 25 years, and we attribute much of that growth to a belief that advanced mill technology is an essential element of maintaining a
“Wood has become the building product of choice in a carbon-constrained world, and no other material can match it for sustainability and renewability,” he said. “Success requires constant innovation.”

The 85,000-square-foot Oregon Forest Science Complex will itself be made with advanced wood products, showcasing the beauty and usefulness of this building technique. In partnership with architecture firm Miller Hull, Michael Green, a leading innovator in high-rise wood construction, is designing the facility.

The A. A. “Red” Emmerson Advanced Wood Products Laboratory will give students access to groundbreaking research opportunities in a program that is consistently ranked as one of the best forestry schools in the world, said Thomas Maness, the Cheryl Ramberg Ford and Allyn C. Ford Dean of OSU’s College of Forestry.

“We’re confident that this laboratory will enhance our students’ experience and provide innovative solutions to the forest products industry,” Maness said. “This gift will allow us to build the state-of-the-art facility we need to test new ideas, yielding sustainable and advanced wood products that can change the world we live in.”

One of the university’s goals is to use the laboratory to establish Oregon as an international leader in the way wood is used in tall commercial and residential structures. That research, said OSU president Ed Ray, could have a profound impact on the state’s economy.

“Sierra Pacific’s commitment is a tremendous investment in the region’s future,” Ray said. “By developing new technologies and products that could be manufactured in Oregon and throughout the West, this lab will have a lasting positive impact on our state and its rural communities. We are deeply grateful for the company’s partnership.”

Efforts to secure funding for the Oregon Forest Science Complex, including $29.7 million in approved state bonds, are nearing completion. The project is one of several fundraising initiatives being led by the Oregon State University Foundation to advance the university’s strategic plan – creating transformative student learning experiences and building on the institution’s areas of greatest strength and potential impact.
Wooden packaging and pallet industries around the world have agreed to work even closer together to harmonise communications about the environmental and economic advantages of using wood rather than other materials.

Delegates at FEFPEB’s (European Federation of Wooden Pallet & Packaging Manufacturers) 66th Congress in Cork, Ireland – titled Wooden pallets and packaging: A sustainable business in a fast-changing world” – heard the consensus was one of the outcomes of the second meeting of the industry’s Global Forum, which met on the first day of the annual conference.

A FEFPEB secretariat business presentation to the congress session said publicity campaigns, driven mainly by several plastics industry companies around the world, had created increasing amounts of negative stories in the media and that misunderstandings about wood were still prevalent. Members of the Global Forum – which consists of leaders from the sector in territories including Europe; Canada and the US; China, Japan and South Korea; Australia and South Africa – agreed that coordinating the facts about the positive impact of using wood, on an international basis, was an important step in defending the world industry against the damaging impact of inaccurate and negative press.

In the FEFPEB presentation to the business session, Secretary General Fons Ceelaert gave the congress latest statistics on the status of the European industry. He also updated delegates on developments in ISPM 15, the Packaging from Nature PR campaign and FEFPEB’s work in the EU, including its contribution to the
The 66th Congress featured a visit to leading operations, including Mid-Cork Pallets as well as Glennon Bros' sawmill.

revision of the Packaging Waste Directive.

The FEFPEB business session was also given updates on markets around the world, starting with the Irish forestry, sawmilling and packaging and pallet industries by Ireland’s Minister for Agriculture Simon Coveney – who opened the event; CEO of local sawmilling operation Glennon Bros, Mike Glennon; and head of Irish Forestry Commission (Coillte) Fergal Leamy. There was a presentation on the UK by Ian Brownlee of the UK Forestry Commission.

Representatives of the Chinese, Korean and Japanese pallet and packaging industries presented developments in their countries, followed by Brent McLendon and Brian Isard, respectively heads of the US and Canadian industries, who gave an overview of their own markets and the public relations initiative they will launch jointly with the Western Pallet Association in 2016.

Chairman of European Confederation of Woodworking Industries (CEI-Bois), Marc Michielsen, gave a presentation on the close match between the European industry’s priority areas and the policy objectives of the European Union. Delegates were also informed about technical developments in sessions on ISPM 15, quality scanning technology and the positive outcomes of a new study about Continued on Page 20.
the use of wood for transporting food (the results of which FEFPEB will be releasing shortly).

The congress was based at Cork’s Rochestown Park Hotel. It also featured visits to Glennon Bros’ state-of-the-art sawmilling facility, which includes the latest stress grading technology from Canada; and Mid-Cork Pallets, one of Ireland’s leading pallet manufacturers.

Social events included a welcome showcase dinner of local Irish speciality food and drink, an evening at Curraheen greyhound racing track and a gala dinner to close the event on Friday. There were also a number of networking breaks featuring congress sponsors.

The event attracted more 250 delegates and partners and generated record sponsorship income.

Gold industry sponsors of the event were: Bes Bollmann; BREPAL; Cape; Coilte; Corali Spa; Eirebloc; ECC Timber Products; EPAL; Euroblock; Glennon Brothers; GP Wood; ITI Engineering; Viking Engineering; IMAL; IMITEK; Kiln Services Ltd; Murray Timber Group; Pooling Partners; Scott Direct; and Storti.

Silver industry sponsors were: Arch Timber Protection; BASF Wolman GMBH; CHEP; EPAL Academy; Ire-Wel Pallets; LPR; and Yaskawa. Enterprise Ireland and Cork Convention Bureau were also gold sponsors of the congress.

FEFPEB President Rob van Hoesel said: “Held in the beautiful and welcoming setting of Cork, our 66th Congress was an excellent event, which gave an essential overview of the most important developments taking place in our sector, and the chance to discuss these, and network and socialise with colleagues. The Timber Packaging & Pallet Confederation (TIMCON) organised a superb and innovative programme with the support of its membership in Ireland.

“This highly successful congress reinforced the critical importance of the pallet and packaging industry to national forest-based industries, which are an outlet for 20 to 25 per cent of European sawn timber production; and to the wider economy. This was highlighted by the attendance of all major Irish sawmilling companies and the Irish Minister for Agriculture.
“The congress attracted delegates not only from our European membership catchment but also from outside it, representing wooden packaging and pallets industries from all over the world. It demonstrates the truly international nature of our business and how companies within it from all over the world are working ever closer together to ensure that wood remains the material of choice for pallets and packaging into the future.”

The Mayor of County Cork, John Paul O'Shea, spoke at the opening of the 66th FEFPEB Congress. To read his remarks, click here.

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Completion of Panama Canal Project Could Divert 10 Percent of Asian Arrivals from West Coast Ports

The Panama Canal links both the east and west coasts of the United States as well as connecting the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, making it an important factor in the global sea trade. Because the Panama Canal is about 110 feet wide at its narrowest, it cannot accommodate large container ships. As a result, some freight destined for the eastern U.S. is unloaded at West Coast ports and moved by truck or rail across the country.

The Panama Canal expansion project is now over 93 percent complete and scheduled for completion sometime in 2016. It is predicted that the completed expansion will result in more ship traffic passing through it to the East Coast, thereby saving on the higher cost of moving freight by rail and truck across the country. According to industry estimates, this could result in a 10 percent dropoff of Asian container ships being unloaded in the West, and presumably a similar drop-off in the percentage of pallets needed to palletize this inbound cargo.

CHEP Opens New Service Center in Malaysia

“This service center sets a new benchmark for modern pallet repair facilities in Asia and positions CHEP to better meet the growth demands of our customers in the region, many of whom are household names such as Nestlé, F&N, Coca-Cola, Mondelēz and Unilever,” stated Tom Gorman, CHEP CEO., speaking about the new facility, located in Malaysia.

The 126,000 sq. ft. facility replaces two smaller existing service centers. The installation of G300 semi-automated repair lines, which also include nail rollers, helps ensure more consistent pallet quality and increased efficiency to improve the reliability and availability of pallets.

Separate unloading and loading bays – five for loading and six for unloading – results in a safer work environment for drivers and workers due to segregation of people and machines, faster truck turnaround times and better operational flow of pallets and trucks in the yard.

The largest indoor storage area for pallets in the Asia Pacific region provides protection from wet weather and further supports pallet quality. Read more here.
WPA Membership Drive Competition

The road to January bragging rights begins right now. Help others enjoy the benefits of WPA membership by recruiting them in time for the 2016 Annual Meeting.

In addition to valuable cash prizes, the winner now also receives the membership trophy, presented at the Annual Meeting.

A regular influx of new members helps maintain the strength of the WPA, as well as to build on our reputation of being "the friendliest Association in pallets." When you recruit new members, the entire WPA membership is the winner!

New members can join and pay on the website. Here is the link: www.westernpallet.org

CHEP's new service center in Malaysia is among the most advanced of its 850 global service centers, the company reports.