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FLITCH AND PANEL DISPATCH

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IN THIS ISSUE

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THREE DAYS IN MAY - HPVA 2012 SPRING CONVENTION.

LACEY ACT AND WOOD PRODUCTS SOURCING - "Focus" Bill Would Retool Lacey Act, Australia's Illegal Logging Bill, LEED's 2012 Revisions Draw Ire and Praise.

HOUSING - Optimistic Sentiment in 4th Quarter For Multifamily Housing, February 2012 Canadian Housing Starts, NAHB Announces Housing Finance System Reform Plan.

NEWS NUGGETS - Boiler MACT, Change in Emerald Ash Borer Policy, AWC Response to the Obama Biobased Procurement Announcement.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS - HPVA 2012 SPRING CONVENTION.

HPVA 2012 SPRING CONVENTION will have the experts speaking on highly important issues for our industry related to export markets, green marketing, enhancing business, international trade, and economic forecasts. Updates and panel sessions on the Lacey Act, Boiler MACT, Formaldehyde, LCA's and other issues are also planned. Take advantage of \$200 discounts now:

<http://www.hpva.org/global/event/hpva-spring-conference>

LACEY ACT AND WOOD PRODUCTS SOURCING

"**FOCUS**" **BILL WOULD RETOOL LACEY** - S.2062 was introduced 2/2/12 and co-sponsored by five Republican Senators: Coburn (Okla.), Enzi (Wyo.), DeMint (S.C.), Lee (Utah), and Risch (Idaho). Lisa Wayne, National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, stated that the act "would bring sanity to the criminal law", as "the law in its current form is overly broad and vague, subject to abuse by prosecutors, and importantly, can trigger extremely harsh criminal penalties without regard to whether someone accused under the law intentionally or knew they were violating the law." *trade compliance.ghy.com*, 3/1/12.

AUSTRALIA'S ILLEGAL LOGGING BILL - The Australian government held public information sessions around the country during late February and early March, 2012 on the Illegal Logging Prohibition Bill introduced in Parliament 11/23/11. The principle exporting countries are from Southeast Asian. Diah Raharjo, director of the Multistakeholder Forestry Program, an Indonesian/British government collaboration, said progress is being made in getting logging firms to comply with certification efforts in Indonesian. She indicated: "we've been pushing for the 27 countries in the EU to close down the illegal market for timber products because it would be useless if we have these products certified but they still keep on buying cheap uncertified wood and timber products." *timberbiz.com.au*, 2/20/12.

LEED'S REVISIONS - The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) latest draft of LEED 2012 released 3/1/12 continues its preference for "FSC [Forest Stewardship Council] or better" drawing the ire of Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI), Canadian Standards Association (CSA), and the American Tree Farm System (ATFS). The USGBC has acknowledged that LCA is now a well-established set of methods for measuring the environmental impacts of materials which are standardized, transparent, credible, and internationally recognized, applicable without prejudice to

all material supplying sectors, are the most appropriate basis for allocation of material credits in LEED. HPVA is currently acquiring transparent and peer-reviewed LCA data for EPDs in line with these ISO standards.

HOUSING

OPTIMISTIC SENTIMENT IN 4TH QUARTER FOR MULTIFAMILY HOUSING - The Multifamily Production Index (MPI) released on 3/8/12 by the NAHB showed steady improvement in the apartment and condominium housing market for the sixth consecutive quarter. The MPI, which measures builder and developer sentiment about current conditions on a scale of 0 to 100, increased from 47.3 in the third quarter to 48.9 in the fourth quarter. This was the highest level in six years. *NAHB, 3/8/12.*

FEBRUARY 2012 CANADIAN HOUSING STARTS - According to the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) the seasonally adjusted annual rate of housing starts was 201,100 units, up from 198,100 units in January. Rising starts in Quebec and to a lesser extent, in British Columbia, were partially offset by decreases in Ontario and Atlantic Canada. Urban multifamily housing starts were more robust than urban single family starts, although the increases were similar: multifamily with a 3.4% increase and single starts with a 3.5% increase. *CMHC, 3/8/12.*

NAHB ANNOUNCES HOUSING FINANCE SYSTEM REFORM PLAN - A comprehensive framework for housing finance would transition Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac to a new mortgage system for single-family and multifamily conventional mortgages. Under the plan, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac would be gradually replaced by private housing finance entities (HFEs) that would be chartered to purchase single-family and multifamily mortgages from loan originators and package the loans into securities for sale to investors worldwide. The federal government would guarantee the securities, not the mortgages. NAHB believes the 12 regional Federal Home Loan Banks could serve as HFEs. *NAHB, 3/2/12*

NEWS NUGGETS

BOILER MACT - In response to a letter from EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson, Senator Wyden (D-OR) withdrew as a co-sponsor of S 1392, the EPA Regulatory Relief Act (MACT Bill). In the letter Administrator Jackson assures Wyden that the agency will be flexible about providing for facilities that demonstrate need, and to making the rules achievable. She stated: "as EPA reviews the public comments and data as we finalize the standards, we will pay close attention to their achievability." The Collins amendment which provided for time to develop a rule that is workable received a majority vote in the Senate but fell short of the 60 votes necessary for passage. EPA's proposed new regulations provide a clear determination that resinous trim is fuel not solid waste. *HPVA, 3/6/12.*

CHANGE IN EMERALD ASH BORER POLICY - The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, in a recent review of the emerald ash borer (EAB) policy, stated that as of 4/1/12 the policy would change. At that time resources will be focused along the perimeter of the quarantine areas in order to maximize the impact on preventing the human-assisted spread of EAB to new locations. Thus, areas that cross state lines will be treated as a single regulated area. *APHIS.*

AWC RESPONSE TO THE OBAMA BIOBASED PROCUREMENT ANNOUNCEMENT - American Wood Council (AWC) President Robert Glowinski stated that the AWC applauded the intent of the President's memorandum to help protect and increase rural jobs by promoting the use of agriculture products. He stated, however, that "the unfortunate irony is that USDA's regulation, referenced in the President's memo, will exclude most wood products – which are nearly all 100% biobased – from the biobased programs." *www.wbpionline.com, 2/29/12.*

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

HPVA 2012 SPRING CONVENTION, MAY 6-8, 2012, Weston Resort, Hilton Head, SC. Go to: <http://www.hpva.org/global/event/hpva-spring-conference>