



COALITION FOR FAIR LUMBER IMPORTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 17, 2002

Scott Shotwell or Deborah Regan
202.862.4505 or 202.862.3686

U.S. Lumber Industry Seeks Negotiated Offset to Unfair Trade

Washington, D.C. – In response to a recent, inaccurate depiction of the U.S. lumber industry's proposed solution to the U.S.-Canada softwood lumber dispute, the Coalition for Fair Lumber Imports issued the following statement:

“The Coalition's proposed solution is to create fully open and competitive timber and lumber markets to best assure long-term stability and fairness to all parties or to fully offset the unfair trade at the border. Our objective is to have the price and volume of Canadian lumber reflect the same levels as in a free market,” said Rusty Wood, Chairman of the Coalition for Fair Lumber Imports. “We believe that the federal governments should be pursuing a resolution of this dispute consistent with ending or offsetting the unfair trade.”

“Unfortunately, recent Canadian practices, particularly in the BC Interior, have further undermined fair and free trade by increasing subsidies and dumping in the U.S. market. For example, the BC government is flooding the market with bug killed timber at a tiny fraction of value, promising reductions in forestry costs without commensurate increases in timber fees, refusing to enforce existing requirements on timber allocation, and encouraging predatory dumping of lumber. The result has been collapsing prices. The Coalition has requested the U.S. government to investigate these practices and, consistent with U.S. law, offset any increased unfair trade with increased duties. Yet, we stand by our preference that the dispute be resolved through negotiations that end and/or offset the unfair trade practices.”

“We have acknowledged that an interim measure might be necessary until reforms can be completed and that any measure must deal effectively with the current flood of unfair trade, but the Coalition has not sought a quota system such as that proposed by British Columbia in 1996. We remain open to new ideas and look forward to a return to negotiations.”

The Coalition for Fair Lumber Imports represents hundreds of large and small lumber producers from across the United States, accounting for 75 percent of US lumber production, and forest landowners.