



**American
Forest & Paper
Association**

3

November 22, 2010

Mr. Kevin Shea
Acting Administrator
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture
14th & Independence Avenue SW
Washington DC 20250

**RE: Docket Number APHIS-2010-0093, Notice of Request for Extension of
Approval of an Information Collection; Lacey Act Declaration
Requirement; Plants and Plant Products**

Dear Mr. Shea:

The American Forest & Paper Association (AF&PA) submits these comments on behalf of its members in the forest products industry in response to request for public views concerning information collection activities under provisions of the revised Lacey Act published by the Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) in the *Federal Register* (75 Fed. Reg. 60065) on September 29, 2010.

AF&PA is the national trade association of the forest products industry, representing pulp, paper, packaging and wood products manufacturers, and forest landowners. Our companies make products essential for everyday life from renewable and recyclable resources that sustain the environment. The forest products industry accounts for approximately 5 percent of the total U.S. manufacturing GDP, putting it on par with the automotive and chemical industries. Industry companies produce \$200 billion in products annually and employ approximately 900,000 people earning \$54 billion in annual payroll. The industry is among the top 10 manufacturing sector employers in 48 states.

AF&PA supports the full implementation of the revised Lacey Act provisions, and particularly the application of the declaration requirement to wood (Harmonized Tariff Schedule Chapter 44), pulp (Chapter Headings 4701-4705) and paper (Chapter Headings 4801-4811). While we understand that APHIS needs time to assess how the declaration process is working during the initial phase-in period, we urge that this testing process be concluded quickly so that APHIS can phase-in the declaration requirement for pulp and paper during 2011. We understand that the declaration requirement is separate from the legality provision of the Lacey Act amendment.

However, the declaration requirement is the tool that would induce companies to ask questions about the type and source of wood that they are importing and to develop and implement appropriate "due care" procedures.

AF&PA believes that the Lacey Act is an important tool in controlling illegal logging globally. Our members are disadvantaged by competition with products manufactured from illegally harvested logs. The declaration requirement is a key part of the legislation by prompting importers to manage actively their supply chain and exercising due care. The burden of the information collection on importers can be minimized through use, as appropriate, of electronic collection technologies.

AF&PA appreciates this opportunity to provide comments on implementation of the revised Lacey Act provisions. AF&PA supports appropriate efforts to combat illegal logging that do not hinder legitimate business transactions. Please do not hesitate to contact us for further information regarding these comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Jacob Handelsman", followed by a horizontal flourish line.

Jacob Handelsman
Senior Director, International Trade