Thursday, September 10, 2026
Suppression Bill Edition
Est. 2026 | Vol. 1, No. 113

THE LUMBER DAILY

TOP STORIES

Trade Panel Finds Injury on Hardwood Plywood, Terminates Softwood Structural

The United States International Trade Commission completed final injury determinations on September 4 finding the domestic industry materially injured by imports of hardwood and decorative plywood from China, Indonesia and Vietnam. The notice published in the Federal Register on September 9 at 91 FR 57383. The determinations cover investigation numbers 701-TA-764 through 766 and 731-TA-1747 through 1749. Softwood structural plywood is out: on negligibility grounds the Commission terminated its investigations concerning softwood structural plywood downfall and stamped and certified softwood structural plywood. Where Commerce had made affirmative critical-circumstances findings, the Commission found the subject imports are not likely to undermine seriously the remedial effect of the orders. Two commissioners did not participate. The petitioner is the Coalition for Fair Trade in Hardwood Plywood, and two of its five members are Oregon companies, States Industries of Eugene and Timber Products of Springfield. The Commission's views are published as Publication 5784.

Colorado Sawmill Warns 90 Jobs With Log Supply Short

Neiman Enterprises filed a Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act notice with the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment on September 8 covering 90 employees at Montrose Forest Products, with separations staggered from that date through November 6. The company says it cannot guarantee operations beyond the next 60 days after failing to find a buyer who would keep the mill running in Montrose. The notice is a warning, not a completed closure. Neiman, a family-owned company based in Hulett, Wyoming, has operated the mill since 2012 and says it has put more than $60 million into upgrades there. The mill drew roughly 98 percent of its logs from public land as of late 2023, and a Good Neighbor Authority sale awarded in February on the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests delivered 50,000 tons of spruce-fir sawlogs to it.

Georgia-Pacific to Close Tacoma Gypsum Plant

Georgia-Pacific said on September 2 that it will permanently close its gypsum wallboard plant on Alexander Avenue in Tacoma, Washington. Employees were told on September 1. The company says all 125 full-time positions are affected, that normal operations will cease in roughly 45 days, and that the site will be closed toward the end of the year. A WARN notice filed with the Washington Employment Security Department is reported at 120 workers with a final day of October 30. Georgia-Pacific attributes the decision to gypsum market conditions and to a decline in repair-and-remodel activity since 2022, which by the company's account follows unusually low turnover in the existing-home market.

■ DEEP DIVE: THE SUPPRESSION BILL

What the Season Has Cost

Oregon's forestry department put gross large-fire costs at $236.2 million as of August 20, against 1,581 fires and 2.5 million acres burned statewide. After about $78.8 million in anticipated federal grants, reimbursements and cost recoveries, the state carries roughly $157.4 million, about two-thirds of the gross. Gross costs stood at $132.8 million on August 3 and $160.3 million on August 7, then rose by more than $75 million again by the 20th. The ten-year average gross cost is $99.8 million and the ten-year average net is $41.3 million. The 2024 season came in at $317.6 million gross and $134.4 million net, so this year's gross snapshot is still below 2024 while the net has already passed it with the season running. The department projects roughly $350 million gross for the full year, a number it built by taking 2024 as a baseline and adding ten percent for inflation. The incident cost figures are the agency's own estimates, assembled by the district where each fire occurred and refined later. On its own protected land, which is a narrower base than the statewide count, the department logged 860 fires and 201,953 acres through September 7, held 92 percent of starts to ten acres or less, and still burned 85 percent more acres than its ten-year average.

The Ask on the Table Today

The state forester's August 6 letter asks the Legislature's Emergency Board for $66,040,014 from the special purpose appropriation for natural disaster response, $11,832,630 from the appropriation for fire protection to cover the severity program, and a $250 million increase in the department's other-funds expenditure limitation. The two general-fund pieces come to $77.9 million. The severity request is the entire remaining balance of a $24 million pot, $12.2 million of which was allocated earlier this year. The Legislature's fiscal office recommends all of that plus another $30 million from the Emergency Fund, taking the general-fund total to roughly $107.9 million, and says the addition could remove the need for part of the planned Treasury borrowing. The State Fire Marshal has a separate item seeking $15 million in general fund and a $13 million other-funds increase drawn temporarily against fire insurance premium tax cash, which held a balance near $46 million on July 27; that office puts its own gross costs at $50.3 million as of August 17, with net costs near $31.6 million. Both requests reach the full Emergency Board as subcommittee recommendations, calendared for this morning.

What a Forestland Owner Pays Into It

An Oregon forestland owner pays into fire protection twice. Classified forestland carries a per-acre patrol assessment set district by district and approved by the Board of Forestry, with a minimum charge on small lots, and private acres draw a fifty percent general-fund match on top. Harvested volume carries the forest products harvest tax, which totaled $6.2949 per MBF in 2025. Of that, $0.6250, or 9.9 percent, went to the Oregon Forest Land Protection Fund, the wildfire component, at a rate that had not moved since 2008. House Bill 3940, passed in the 2025 regular session, reset that component to a $1.00 base rate adjusted annually for inflation, with no calendar-year sunset of the kind that applies to the tax's other components, and removed the fund's reserve-base requirement. The revenue department describes the Forest Land Protection Fund as a form of insurance for fires beyond what local districts can handle; it is funded half by the harvest tax and half by the general fund. The same bill raises minimum lot assessments and provides $9 million of one-time rate relief in the first year of this biennium, $1.5 million of it directed at grazing rates. From the 2027-29 biennium, headquarters and centralized agency costs come out of the per-acre landowner rate and move into the department's budget.

The Insurance Was Dropped in 2023

The department carried a firefighting insurance policy dating to 1973 until it dropped the coverage in 2023, after the offered deductible reached $78.5 million against a maximum payout of $25 million. Oregon has self-insured since. What replaced the policy is borrowing, which supplies cash without transferring any of the loss. The department plans to take $150 million from the State Treasury in three loans, $60 million in September, $60 million in October and $30 million in November, under authority created by House Bill 3940; before any transfer, the Treasury and the borrowing agency must report to the Emergency Board. The fiscal analysis is blunt about the back end: because cost shares, reimbursements and federal grant money will be delayed, a legislative appropriation to repay the loan is likely. The gap being bridged is measurable. The department's contracted vendor payment window is 45 days; under the state fire service mobilization plan local agencies have 60 days to invoice the State Fire Marshal and that office must pay within 90 days; federal reimbursement often takes about three years. The fire marshal is still owed $25.6 million in federal reimbursements covering the 2023, 2024 and 2025 seasons. In December 2024 the Legislature met in special session and approved $218 million to clear unpaid wildfire bills, $191.5 million of it to the forestry department. House Bill 3940 put permanent money behind mitigation work and behind the local-district fire fund, and created the borrowing mechanism, and it left the state's large-fire suppression account on a one-time appropriation reconsidered every biennium.

WHAT YOU MISSED YESTERDAY

Wednesday, September 9, and Thursday morning - business, markets, and the broader economy.

- Stocks fell for a third straight session. The S&P 500 closed at 7,636.36, down 37.16 points or 0.48 percent. The Dow closed at 52,380.66, down 405.41 points or 0.77 percent. The Nasdaq closed at 26,253.34, down 168.07 points or 0.64 percent.
- Treasury yields rose across the curve with the front end leading, a week before the Federal Open Market Committee meets on September 15 and 16. The two-year par yield finished Wednesday at 4.43 percent, up four basis points. The ten-year finished at 4.83 percent and the thirty-year at 5.28 percent, each up three.
- August producer prices, released Thursday morning, rose 0.4 percent on the month and 5.4 percent from a year earlier. Excluding food, energy and trade services the increases were 0.3 percent and 4.7 percent. Processed goods for intermediate demand rose 1.8 percent on the month and 11.5 percent on the year, with more than eighty percent of the monthly move in processed energy, up 7.3 percent.
- Initial jobless claims for the week ending September 5 were 206,000, down 1,000, with the four-week average at 206,000. Continuing claims for the week ending August 29 were 1,774,000. In the week ending August 22, the last for which state rates are published, Oregon and Washington each reported insured unemployment of 1.9 percent. The thirty-year fixed mortgage averaged 6.76 percent in Thursday's weekly survey, up from 6.71 percent, with the fifteen-year at 6.09 percent.
- Retail diesel jumped in the September 7 survey. The national average reached $5.967 a gallon, up 36.8 cents on the week and $2.201 from a year earlier. The West Coast average reached $6.987 and California $7.764. The Bank of Canada's daily rate put the US dollar at 1.3798 Canadian on Wednesday, from 1.3784 Tuesday. No crude settlement could be pinned to a contract month for Wednesday, so none is printed here.

INDUSTRY & COMPANY NEWS

- **Strong by Form** closed a US$6.75 million first tranche of a US$12 million Series A round for its Woodflow-core structural slab. Boisei investments led, with participation from Chilean forestry group CMPC, which led the seed round, alongside VX Ventures, Ternel, Savia Ventures, Teampact Ventures, Axel Carbon and FINSA. The Madrid-based company says the money funds European manufacturing capacity, certification and market entry over two years, with construction partners in Spain, France, Germany and Switzerland.
- **Hancock Lumber** promoted Matt Duprey to chief white pine officer effective August 31, a new role leading the strategic direction and operations of the company's Eastern White Pine business across its Bethel, Casco and Pittsfield operations.
- **ABC Supply** named president and chief operating officer Mike Jost as chief executive officer effective January 1, 2027, under a leadership succession plan set out alongside the current chief executive's retirement.

- **Ardis** acquired Secant, a UK-based developer of cutting-optimization software used in panel and solid-wood processing. Terms were not disclosed in the announcement.
- **National fire preparedness** dropped to level 3 effective 7:30 a.m. Mountain time on September 9, down from level 4, on improving fire weather and lighter resource ordering. Crews were working to contain 58 large fires, with 13,193 firefighters and support personnel assigned to incidents nationwide and 3,079,576 acres burning across all active fires. As of this morning, 53,940 fires have burned 8,410,639 acres year to date, against 48,458 fires and 4,320,279 acres in the same period last year.

■ MARKETS & FUEL COSTS SNAPSHOT

INDICATOR	VALUE	TREND
On-highway diesel, national average	**$5.967/gal**	Up 36.8 cents, September 7 survey
On-highway diesel, California	**$7.764/gal**	Up 54.6 cents on the same survey
2-year Treasury yield	**4.43%**	Up 4 basis points Wednesday, front end leading
10-year Treasury yield	**4.83%**	Up 3 basis points from Tuesday's 4.80%
Producer prices, final demand	**+5.4% y/y**	August print, up 0.4% on the month
US dollar in Canadian dollars	**1.3798**	Wednesday daily rate, from 1.3784 Tuesday

■ THE BOTTOM LINE

Oregon's fire bill is the day's largest number: $236.2 million gross and $157.4 million net as of August 20, with subcommittee recommendations going to the Emergency Board this morning for $77.9 million plus another $30 million. The forestry department plans to borrow $150 million from the State Treasury across three months, having dropped its firefighting insurance in 2023 while federal reimbursement often takes about three years. Forestland owners are paying more into that system this year, with the wildfire slice of the harvest tax reset from $0.6250 to a $1.00 base rate after eighteen years unchanged. In trade, the injury finding on hardwood and decorative plywood from China, Indonesia and Vietnam landed on September 4, and softwood structural plywood came out of the case as negligible. Two plants are cutting jobs: 125 go at a Tacoma gypsum plant closing by year end, and 90 are on notice at a Colorado sawmill whose owner could not find a buyer. Diesel added 36.8 cents in a week to $5.967 nationally, and $7.764 in California.