

## Domestic Furniture, EUDR Highlight Program

ASHEVILLE, NC – A domestic furniture report and a timely update on the European Union rules were highlights of the 2024 Summer Conference of Appalachian Hardwood Manufacturers, Inc.

More than 140 attendees participated in the event July 20-23 at The Omni Grove Park Inn in Asheville, NC, with business sessions, networking and fun sporting events. The consensus was informative sessions at a great venue.

The program kicked off with a domestic wood furniture manufacturing report from Curtis Hamlin, director of supply chain for Century Furniture, The Hickory, NC-based company was founded in 1947 by the Shuford family who maintain ownership today.

Century is renowned for high quality solid wood furniture in all product categories. Hamlin said the global wood furniture market in 2023 was \$283B with home office and accessories at 36%; living room at 27%; dining room at 19% and bedroom at 16%.

Nearly 35% of Century's annual sales are hardwood furniture and the company utilizes white oak, hard and soft maple, walnut and poplar. The company also purchases veneers and sheet stock.

Hamlin noted that 85 percent of Century's products are manufactured in the USA. He said trends for 2024 include darker tones with designs that are organic and simple with rich grain.

The second session was an update on the European Union Deforestation Regulations that will go into effect in 2025. American Hardwood Ex-

*Century Furn. uses solids and veneer resources in its NC-made products for dining, bedroom and occasional tables.*



port Council Executive Director Mike Snow said updates from the EU just days earlier report that the rules are on schedule to begin implementation.

The EUDR requires timber importers to report the geolocation of harvest for every piece of lumber or product brought into Europe. The law is extremely burdensome for primary and secondary manufacturers who do not record this data.

Snow said the U.S. is far ahead of other countries because of private land records for tax purposes. AHEC has developed a system using a hunting software that details tracts of land and can show forestland changes.

The costs to continually update the system and  
**(See Conference on page 3)**

*Attendees learned updates on Poplar for cross-laminated timber which may pass soon.*



### Impact of EUDR on US Exports

- economic trade value affected exceeds \$4.5 Billion.
- hardwood forest industry uses raw material that comes from hundreds of sources for developing different products.
- US pulp and paper industry uses close to 40% of residues from sawmills or forest residues result of thinning or harvest operations.
- Wood pellets made from almost 100% forest residues.

## The way I see it...

By Tom Inman, AHMI President

....another great Summer Conference provided updates on key industry issues, fun sporting events and networking opportunities to AHMI members and guests to gather.

The Omni Grove Park Inn was the destination for more than 140 attendees who were pleased with the upgraded rooms, dining options and meeting facilities. It has been eight years since AHMI last visited GPI.

The highlight were presentations on key industry topics that are detailed on page 1 of this newsletter. The electronic version of these are available at [www.apalachianhardwood.org/videos](http://www.apalachianhardwood.org/videos).

AHMI meetings are all about networking and this event gave members and guests the chance to talk about business this year. These were often short conversations as markets continue to be down with the overall economy.

Bright spots reported were white oak markets, industrial materials and exports have improved in June and July. Attendees reported that production has declined in recent weeks to adjust to demand. This has increased pricing for a few species and grades.

The 2025 Annual Meeting is Feb. 26-March 2. Mark your calendar now for Fort Lauderdale, FL.



### Surprise Visit

*A black bear made a quick visit outside the Omni Grove Park Inn in Asheville, NC, during the 2024 AHMI Summer Conference.*



## MEMBERSHIP

AHMI is pleased to announce new members:

### Distributor

Sunny Fund NA, Inc.  
Joseph Sankow  
777 Frank Rd, Box 31  
Columbus, OH 43223  
Phone: 614-887-7315  
Email: [jsankow@snfna.com](mailto:jsankow@snfna.com)  
Website: [www.snfna.com](http://www.snfna.com)

Welcome to this company!

New members are vital to the work of AHMI and if you know of companies that should join, please share that information with the AHMI office. We have a packet of materials that explain the promotion work, retirement plan, and meeting opportunities.

## IWF Atlanta Is Aug. 6-9

IWF is your source for all the latest products from across the woodworking world. As North America's largest woodworking trade show and conference, it attracts thousands of attendees.

Please visit **AHMI in booth C731**. IWF offers:

- everything new and next in manufacturing technology, innovation, product design, learning, networking and emerging sectors.
- Thousands of new products showcased by the world's top manufacturers and providers of machinery, supplies and services.
- cutting edge demonstrations of machinery, tools and other products live on the show floor.
- industry experts to exchange ideas and expand your business.
- new methods and solutions to your business challenges and help your company work more efficiently, expand to new markets and ultimately become more profitable.

For details and to register, visit [www.iwfatlanta.com](http://www.iwfatlanta.com). Please tell customers to meet you in the AHMI booth.

## Conference from page 1

reporting will be in the millions of dollars annually. Snow said the EU is not ready to track or enforce the regulations.

The U.S. government and other countries are seeking delays in implementation of the new law, he said.

The Real American Hardwood Coalition provided an update on its work to promote U.S. hardwood products to domestic consumers. The campaign began in 2021 with research and launched the [realamericanhardwood.com](http://realamericanhardwood.com) website in 2022.

RAH began advertising on the Magnolia Network, streaming services and social media in 2023 and is in its second phase in 2024. This phase includes expanded advertising and a website targeting architects and designers at [realamericanhardwood.pro](http://realamericanhardwood.pro).

RAH Coalition Chair Linda Jovanovich of the Hardwood Manufacturers Association said results have been millions of contacts, thousands of messages and awareness of the brand. The next phase is designed to move consumers to purchase.

The campaign is seeking voluntary funding from the hardwood industry and foundations in 2024.

The Conference included breakout sessions on Poplar CLT, the AHMI 401k Multiple Employer Plan and Lumber Payroll software. AHMI has worked with Virginia Tech and West Virginia University on research to add Poplar as a species for cross-laminated timber.

Researcher Sailesh Adhikari explained that the committee tasked with analyzing the data and approving the request is in its final stage. It is expected to pass in coming weeks and be included in codes in 2025.

Adhikari asked attendees to participate in fact-finding on the benefits and challenges for Poplar CLT for sawmills, secondary manufacturers and others. The findings will be included in his final report on his research.

The breakouts on Lumber Payroll and the AHMI 401k MEP detailed each and encouraged members to enroll. Both provide improved services at lower costs for member companies.



*Conference ended with a tour at Oaks Unlimited Sawmill & Yard in Waynesville, NC. Owner Joe Pryor explains process to attendees.*

Details on these presentations are available from the AHMI office and all are available on the AHMI website at [www.appalachianhardwood.org](http://www.appalachianhardwood.org).

The conference concluded with a sawmill and yard tour at Oaks Unlimited in Waynesville, NC. Oaks Unlimited owner and AHMI Board member Joe Pryor showcased the company's operations.

The next meeting of the association will be the 2025 Annual Meeting on Feb. 26-March 2 at the Marriott Harbor Beach Resort, Fort Lauderdale, FL.

## Sporting Winners At 24SC

There were sporting tournaments during the conference. The winners were:

### **Golf**

Low gross: 1-Sawyer McCarty; 2-Jeff Gowder; 3-Peter McCarty; Low net: 1-Matt Guterrez; 2-Tony Summerow;

Long Drive-Matt Hill;

Closest to the Pin: Brandon Turman and Matt Guterrez.

### **Sporting Clays**

1-Addison Fox; 2-Tony Honeycutt; 3-Chuck Carter

### **Croquet**

1-Dan and Beth Mathews; 2-John and Martha Toncich.

# Supreme Court Reduces Agencies' Authority

By Dana Lee Cole, Executive Director

On June 28, the Supreme Court issued a long-awaited decision *Loper Bright Enterprises v. Raimondo*, on a case that challenged the so-called “Chevron doctrine,” a powerful legal mechanism whereby federal courts would give extra weight to a federal agency’s interpretation of ambiguous or vague federal laws.

Federal agencies have often invoked the doctrine in cases where industry seeks to overturn burdensome regulations on the basis of agency overreach. Although rarely used in recent years at the Supreme Court level, the Chevron doctrine has played a role in the lower courts.

For 40 years, the so-called “Chevron deference” has given federal regulators an enormous advantage in the courtroom, which has handed legal victories to regulators in 77 percent of cases where the doctrine has been invoked.

Supporters of the Loper Bright decision believe that Congress will now have to provide much clearer guidance regarding regulatory reform measures. Opponents fear that the courts will try to take the place of technical experts on rules impacting finance to the environment.

Many deregulation activists have also cheered the decision as the beginning of the unravelling of dozens of past court cases upholding the administrative authority of federal agencies. Legal experts in the business world have a balanced approach - that in the wake of adverse court decisions on the issuance of an air or water permit, for example, industry makes investment decisions based on the outcome of a case.

These financial investments will likely deter a “litigation explosion” whereby industry parties may seek to relitigate issues once decided based on Chevron. To underscore the point, the Court stated in its opinion that mere use of the Chevron doctrine in long-settled court cases cannot constitute a “special justification” for overturning past decisions. The court says judicial reluctance to overturn a lower court decision would further stem a rush to relitigate past actions under the Clean Air or Clean Water Act.



From a manufacturing and wood products perspective, the potential impacts of the Loper decision will probably have the most bearing on Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) rules, on which industry groups wage constant legal battles. Congress drafted most major environmental laws that gave EPA the flexibility to draft regulations that could pivot to new technologies. This created the type of statutory vagueness that spawned a wave of environmental litigation that has helped create a climate of business uncertainty for many decades.

Although tested in court, Agency interpretations won out over industry concerns due to Chevron. The fallout from the Loper decision has been limited, but there are a few that have been noticed.

In March the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) filed a lawsuit against EPA to block implementation of the agency’s new standard for fine particulate matter (PM 2.5), which is estimated to impose up to \$900 million in compliance costs on the wood products sector alone. NAM is arguing that EPA unlawfully ignored evidence of economic impacts while pursuing a rulemaking under its own agency discretion rather than through the mandatory processes outlined in the Clean Air Act.

EPA will not be able to rely on the Chevron doctrine to convince the court to defer to its own interpretation of the law, therefore lowering the bar for overturning the PM 2.5 rules. It will also be interesting to see how Loper Bright impacts the Supreme Court deliberations on a National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) case in 2025.

The *Loper* decision does not mean that industry will always come out on top when taking on a federal agency. The Supreme Court merely shifted the balance of power from federal agencies to the federal courts, which often lean pro-industry.

The Federation will keep you posted on the evolution of the influence of Loper Bright on federal rules and regulations.

**AHMI's Tom Inman talks with Barry Willis, Purchasing Manager at Ethan Allen Furniture in Marion, NC. The facility makes cased goods and upholstery products.**



## Furniture Expo 2024 Attracts Manufacturers

Hundreds of North Carolina furniture makers participated in the Furniture Manufacturing Expo recently in Hickory, NC. AHMI was an exhibitor and spoke with dozens of cased goods and upholstery plant managers.

The event bills itself as the only trade show in North America showcasing the largest gathering of suppliers and the latest solutions for manufacturers of home furnishings. It targeted North Carolina companies but included others from across the southeast.

Attendees reported that plants were operating on shorter schedules as sales are off in 2024. The managers were looking at new equipment, automation and sources for solid hardwood, sheet goods and hardware.

AHMI distributed more than 150 Certified Appalachian Resource Guides to attendees and answered questions about hardwood availability. There is interest in white oak, red oak and poplar lumber and dimension parts. AHMI promoted the use of hard maple and soft maple to recapture markets solid parts that have been replaced with European beech.

For more information, contact the AHMI office.

## AHMI Calendar

Appalachian Hardwood Manufacturers, Inc. plans to attend the following events to promote AHMI member companies and products.

Members are welcome to participate in the AHMI exhibit and we can assist with registration if required. Please check with the AHMI office:

Aug. 6-9: **International Woodworking Fair**, Atlanta, GA

Sept. 10: **ALC Meeting**, Asheville, NC

Oct. 2-4: **NHLA Convention**, St. Louis, MO

Oct. 26-30: **High Point Furniture Market**, High Point, NC

Oct. 30: **NC Export Conference**, Greensboro, NC

Nov. 12: **ALC**, Johnson City, TN

Nov. 12-15: **GreenBuild**, Philadelphia, PA

### 2025

Jan. 14: **ALC**, Concord, NC

Feb. 26-March 2: **AHMI Annual Meeting**, Fort Lauderdale, FL

March 11: **ALC**, Roanoke, VA

March 17-19: **IHLA**, Indianapolis, IN

For more information, please call the AHMI office at (336) 885-8315 or [info@appalachianhardwood.org](mailto:info@appalachianhardwood.org).

If you know of events that AHMI should consider for participation, please contact the office. Members are welcome to work in the booth or meet customers.

AHMI also has materials member companies can use in exhibitions to explain the benefits of Appalachian Hardwoods and forest management. Please contact the office for details.

AHMI also has materials for member companies to use in your trade exhibits. There are Wood Fact Books, Guidelines for Grading & Scaling Logs, Characteristics of Appalachian Hardwoods and hardwood sample kits available.

Please contact the office to learn more or place your order.

# RAH Expands Campaign To Architects/Designers

The Real American Hardwood Coalition (RAHC) and the National Hardwood Lumber Association (NHLA), in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service, have launched a new website at [RealAmericanHardwood.pro](http://RealAmericanHardwood.pro).

It was developed to educate architects, interior designers, and construction professionals on the attributes of Real American Hardwood® products, as well as introduce new and innovative hardwood product technologies for the built environment.

Great architecture and design are brought to life with beautiful, natural, and sustainable materials. Learn more at [RealAmericanHardwood.pro](http://RealAmericanHardwood.pro).

Filled with information on the uses, value, and benefits of the most commonly specified domestic hardwood species, the website also explores new ways for design/build professionals to incorporate hardwood products—such as thermally modified hardwood and cross-laminated timber—into commercial and residential spaces.

A sustainability section provides visitors with data—backed by science and research—on the environmental and climate friendly qualities of hardwood products, and how they compare to alternatives, such as vinyl and steel.

Linda Jovanovich, chair of the RAHC, says the new website plays an important role in educating

current and future professionals. "As the RAHC educates architects, designers, specifiers, and students, [RealAmericanHardwood.pro](http://RealAmericanHardwood.pro) is a valuable resource to serve those communities. I am looking forward to adding it to our education toolbox and putting it to work alongside our website at [RealAmericanHardwood.com](http://RealAmericanHardwood.com), designed to inform and inspire consumers and prosumers alike."

"There are many different factors that are important to consider when designing a space for people to gather, while celebrating the Naturally Authentic® beauty and character of Real American Hardwood products," says Dallin Brooks, executive director of the NHLA. "From the visual aesthetics of lumber to the functionality of different species, this new platform will equip all involved in the design/build community with the information they need to create a positive impact on people within design spaces and the environment outside by specifying Real American Hardwood flooring, cabinetry, millwork, and furniture."

The website also includes a featured projects section, where visitors can read case studies about unique projects and submit their own work for publication.

Visit [RealAmericanHardwood.pro](http://RealAmericanHardwood.pro) to experience the website and learn more.

— 01 Why Hardwood?

# Value Beyond Beauty

Discover the unparalleled qualities of Real American Hardwood®! From sustainability to value, beauty, and durability, experience hardwood's diverse benefits. Deepen your understanding of how hardwood stands up to man-made materials like vinyl and laminate.

— Hardwood is **Sustainable**

Architects and designers can champion responsible forest management by choosing U.S. hardwoods. Learn the benefits of managed forests and sustainable practices, such as...

— Hardwood is **Valuable**

Choose hardwood for its unmatched durability, aesthetics, and increased property value. Invest wisely—hardwood needs less frequent replacement, saving you money over time. Enhance your resale value and secure a long-term asset for your design projects with the timeless appeal of...

# AHMI Programs Provide Service, Save \$\$\$



## 401k Multiple Employer Plan

In a partnership with UBS Financial, the AHMI plan allows hardwood companies to pool existing retirement accounts or start new programs for employees. The plan offers economies of scale pricing that lowers costs for recordkeeping, third party administrators and financial consultants.

The MEP sponsor is AHMI and the association maintains fiduciary responsibilities. Participants have access to low-cost investments that are typically only available to very large corporate plans.

There is also no individual company audit requirement saving staff time and creating efficiencies. Participants have found savings of \$5,000-\$50,000 annually and streamlined recordkeeping.

Adopting employers have plan design flexibility and can retain their individual plan features such as a matching formula, vesting and eligibility. UBS is the world's largest wealth managers and the AHMI team, Southeast Wealth Consultants, is the plan provider designated by UBS.

The initiation or transfer can be completed in just a few weeks. UBS Financial schedules meetings with company employees to explain the offerings and help with decisions. For more information, please contact the AHMI office at (336) 885-8315.



## Lumber Payroll

Appalachian Hardwood Manufacturers, Inc. has established a partnership with a payroll software and supplemental insurance provider.

Dough HCM LLC offers unique, proprietary technology to its customers through Lumber Payroll. It is specific to the hardwood industry payroll needs and offers electronic access to wages.

This benefit helps employees reduce financial strain and hardship AND differentiates employers, allowing them to offer a unique benefit that is expected to attract and retain talent.

AHMI members will be guaranteed a minimum 15% in cost reductions from their existing providers. Lumber Payroll provides savings in a contractually obligated rebate. The rebate will be paid to the member companies quarterly.

As more AHMI members adopt, Lumber Payroll increases the rebate to members using the software. Initial adopters are saving thousands of dollars in expenses.

For more information, contact Nick Koen at **Lumber Payroll** at Tel: 315-750-9031 or email: [nick@lumberpayroll.com](mailto:nick@lumberpayroll.com).

## Certified Appalachian Meets 'Green' Needs

AHMI members seeking certification for products to meet customer needs should enroll in Certified Appalachian Legal & Sustainable. The program provides a third-party audit of resources.

It also verifies by county of origin the lumber that is being shipped in all transactions. Program participants have learned Certified Appalachian provides value to their customers.

As geographic location of timber resources becomes more important for domestic and ex-

port customers, Certified Appalachian pinpoints the harvest area in the region.

These details are simple to secure from landowners and loggers in this program. The standards were approved by the AHMI Board of Trustees in 2018 and application is simple with most companies approved in seven days.

For more information, please call the AHMI office at (336) 885-8315 or [info@appalachianhardwood.org](mailto:info@appalachianhardwood.org).