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## **AWA Gives Opinion on Softwood Lumber to U.S. Dept. of Commerce**

By Phil Clement

Canada and the United States are still locked in a trade dispute over Canadian softwood lumber exports. There are serious and far-reaching consequences to any such agreement for Canadians, which could have significant impacts on who controls our forest lands, protection of wildlife and waters, and future employment and public benefits from the forest.

Environmental organizations in Alberta advocate a solution to the softwood lumber dispute that addresses the economic, environmental and social problems related to forestry in Alberta. The following reforms would not only solve the softwood lumber dispute, but would also lead to a more innovative, ecologically sound and publicly beneficial forest sector by reducing corporate control over forest lands, creating opportunities for new entrants, ensuring that we get full value for the forest resource and ensuring greater public participation and environmental protection in our forests.

To this end, the Alberta Wilderness Association, in conjunction with other environmental groups, is making a submission to the U.S. Department of Commerce, which has requested initial informal input on the softwood lumber issue by October 7. Canadian and U.S. environmental groups are also considering a lobby day in Washington during the Department of Commerce process.

