

NEWS RELEASE

Correcting Statements By The US Lumber Coalition About Our July 27th News Release: “Setting the Record Straight On The Softwood Lumber Trade between Canada and the United States”

By Russ Taylor, RUSS TAYLOR GLOBAL and David Elstone, SPAR TREE GROUP/ VIEW
FROM THE STUMP

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The US Lumber Coalition (USLC) continues to state several inaccuracies and made several misquotes within their July 29th news release, “[US Lumber Coalition Comments on Canadian Reaction to US Trade Law Enforcement](#).” This was partly in reaction to Russ Taylor’s, (of [Russ Taylor Global](#)) and David Elstone’s, (of [Spar Tree Group](#)) July 27th news release, “[Setting the Record Straight On The Softwood Lumber Trade between Canada and the United States](#)”

Unfortunately, USLC continues to state several inaccuracies and provide numerous misquotes made within their July 29th response that require correcting. Once again, we are highlighting inaccurate information as well as misquotes, with our response for the record:



USLC STATEMENT #1

*"A number of organizations and individuals in Canada who have a long history of strongly advocating for Canadian industry – such as the BC Lumber Trade Council (BCLTC), the BC Council of Forest Industries (COFI), British Columbia Forest Minister Parmar, and **B.C.-based industry analysts such as Russ Taylor** – have made statements about the increased dumping rate"*

OUR RESPONSE:

Yes, the BCLTC, COFI and British Columbia's Minister of Forests Ravi Parmar did issue statements about the increased softwood lumber antidumping duty rate. No, Russ Taylor and David Elstone did not provide any comment on the increased duty rate in their news release, [Setting the Record Straight On The Softwood Lumber Trade between Canada and the United States](#), dated July 27th. – Our news release focused on facts to counter the erroneous claims made by the USLC. We did reference “duties” four times in our July 27 release (Responses 4, 5 and 6), but only to highlight our opinion that higher duties will increase lumber prices to end users in the US. And following the implementation of the anti-dumping duties this week, W-SPF 2x4 prices as reported by *Random Lengths* have increased by US\$20/Mbf (+4%)

USLC STATEMENT #2

"These advocates for the Canadian industry are ignoring some very basic fundamental facts as they struggle to justify Canada's continued unfair trade practices, which includes harmful dumping fueled by Canada's massive excess lumber production capacity of 8 billion board feet."

OUR RESPONSE:

Russ Taylor Global and Spar Tree Group are independent consultants serving clients throughout Canada and United States. Sure, we have advocated on various subject matters in the past, but we took extra measures to ensure the content of the July 27 news release was factual given the sensitivities of the softwood lumber trade conflict.

Our news release addressed the variability of estimated Canada and US lumber capacities and why the USLC's calculation of 8 billion board feet in excess Canadian lumber capacity is not practical or at least is a very loose and meaningless calculation. We clearly state that any calculated “excess capacity,” and especially the theoretical 8 billion board feet, means very little if there are constraints on the availability of economic logs. British Columbia and many parts of Canada do not have the logs to process at the stated mill capacities.

Stating that there is “massive excess capacity” in Canada is a USLC claim that we have demonstrated as inaccurate, yet the USLC continues to recirculate their claim again in their July 29th release. They did not make any effort to refute our response.

USLC STATEMENT #3

"It is remarkable that everyone advocating for Canadian industry, including Canadian industry associations, industry talking heads like Russ Taylor, and provincial government officials, ignores the fact that the U.S. Department of Commerce has determined that the Canadian lumber industry is engaging in unfair trade practices, and that the U.S. International Trade Commission has determined repeatedly that Canada's unfair trade practices are harming U.S. lumber producers and suppressing the continued natural growth of the U.S. industry."

OUR RESPONSE: Russ Taylor and David Elstone were not "advocates" for the Canadian industry in this instance. We are independent consultants and analysts that provide perspectives, analysis and forecasts on the Canadian, US and international industries and markets. We have views on many topics, including duties and competitiveness, but none of these topics or anything related to unfair trade practices were explicitly expressed in our July 27th news release.

USLC STATEMENT #4

"Canadian industry, government officials, and Mr. Russ Taylor call antidumping and countervailing duties unjustified and punitive."

OUR RESPONSE:

For the record, Russ Taylor (and for that matter David Elstone) did not mention or call the antidumping and countervailing duties "unjustified and punitive" in our July 27 news release.

USLC STATEMENT #5

"So let me be crystal clear: Canada, we do not need your dumped and subsidized excess lumber"

OUR RESPONSE:

Yes, the US market does need Canadian lumber. While the US federal government endeavours to boost US domestic timber and lumber production, until such time that domestic supply develops, the US market will continue to be reliant on imported lumber. We addressed this in our July 27th news release.

USLC STATEMENT #6

"Messrs. Russ Taylor and David Elstone published an opinion piece highlighting their inability to consider all facts as they strongly advocate for the interests of the B.C. lumber industry: "Messrs. Taylor and Elstone recently issued an opinion piece in which Taylor stated that 'as industry consultants based in British Columbia, Canada,' they felt compelled to attempt to correct the record regarding statements made by the U.S. Lumber

Coalition. Mr. Taylor correctly identified himself and Mr. Elstone as B.C.-based consultants, and, as such, his conclusions regarding this matter are no surprise,” stated van Heyningen. “Unfortunately, yet perhaps predictably based on Mr. Taylor’s past statements regarding this issue, instead of presenting ‘a more accurate assessment of the US and Canada softwood lumber situation,’ Mr. Taylor’s opinion piece ignores the most fundamental facts about Canada’s excessive reliance on the U.S. market and the harm it causes to the U.S. softwood lumber industry, while ironically highlighting the fact that the antidumping and countervailing duty orders have been extremely effective in reducing the harm of unfair trade.””

OUR RESPONSE:

USLC’s statement ignores our intent to present an accurate assessment of the US and Canada lumber situation. Note that the USLC only provides unsupported claims in response to the data that we presented.

We did not issue an opinion piece; we issued a news release based on facts to help create a better understanding of this trade conflict for both the US and Canada.

We provided accurate facts to correct USLC’s misinformation. We covered Canadian and US production, US and Canada sawmill operating rates, BC and Canada exports to the US, Canada’s market share of US consumption, and other facts and trends.

Canadian sawmills rely on the US market, no question – which we show in our July 27th news release, including Canada’s declining lumber exports to the US and its declining share of US lumber consumption.

“...and the harm it causes to the U.S. softwood lumber industry.” We show that US South lumber production is rising and is already higher than all of Canada’s, which is falling. US production is increasing while Canada’s production is declining. How can that be harm?

“...while ironically highlighting the fact that the antidumping and countervailing duty orders have been extremely effective in reducing the harm of unfair trade.” Nowhere do we state that duties have had any effect on Canadian lumber production. We clearly state that the decline in BC lumber production is from other sources (beetles, fires, government forest policy). Production in the rest of Canada has been stable.

In closing, our July 27th news release was strictly tied to correcting erroneous facts and claims made by the USLC. Our facts including data have not been refuted by the USLC.

We do find it necessary to respond when our names, Russ Taylor and David Elstone, and our business names are mentioned specifically and misquoted several times. The USLC presents sensational stories with many inaccuracies, and we are calling them out using the facts, as leaving the USLC’s claims unaddressed does not serve the Canadian or American industry and public otherwise.

The authors are independent consultants and have received no funding or industry support for this article. We have attempted to provide a more factual and balanced analysis without unnecessary or misleading language.

Russ Taylor, RPF-ret, MBA

RUSS TAYLOR GLOBAL

Vancouver, BC Canada

rustaylor@rustaylorglobal.com

www.rustaylorglobal.com



Russ Taylor has a 50-year career in wood products operations, market analysis and intelligence. He has conducted work on timber, lumber and wood products assignments for hundreds of global industry clients and has travelled extensively (~100,000 miles per year) to key producing, exporting and importing countries around the world to obtain first-hand insights.

Russ established and operated *International WOOD MARKETS Group* for 28 years until 2020 and has published 45 multi-client reports, hundreds of articles and has made about 300 presentations all over the world.

David Elstone, RPF, GDBA

Spar Tree Group/ View From The Stump

Roberts Creek, BC Canada

david@spartreegroup.com

www.spartreegroup.com

www.viewfromthestump.ca



David is a professional forester and a highly regarded forest industry expert with over thirty years of experience within the sector. David is the managing director of Spar Tree Group Inc., a business strategy consultancy firm, and the publisher of the View From The Stump newsletter as well as the associated blog, Right From The Stump.

David's consulting clientele and newsletter subscribers benefit from his unique background in BC forest policy and politics, the forest products sector and forest management by providing an independent perspective of the trends and issues affecting the British Columbia forest industry.