

***Quick Updates*** ***from*** ***Your HF Team***

# *****Narrowly Divided Congress Kicks Off with Bipartisanship:*****

**Bipartisan Lawmakers Introduce Bill to Boost Efficient Forest Management**

On February 1, a quartet of bipartisan, federal lawmakers, including Sens. Steve Daines (R-MT) and Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) and Reps. Dan Newhouse (R-WA) and Scott Peters (D-CA) introduced the [Root and Stem Authorization Act.](https://www.daines.senate.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Root-Stem-One-Pager-1.31.2023.pdf)  The legislation would encourage landowners and regulators to come together to design and implement forest restoration projects.  A variety of industry and environmental groups are praising the bill, characterizing it as an important step forward to cut back on wildfire risks while promoting science-based land management.  The Federation will keep you posted on the bill’s progress as it moves through both sides of the Capitol.

**Expanding Agricultural Exports Act of 2023 Rallies Support from Both Parties**

# In what appears to be a bid to make February “Bipartisanship Month” on Capitol Hill, another posse of lawmakers from both parties have introduced the Expanding Agricultural Exports Act of 2023, a [House](https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/648?q=%7B%22search%22%3A%5B%22H.R.+648%22%5D%7D&s=2&r=1) and [Senate](https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/senate-bill/176?q=%7B%22search%22%3A%5B%22S.+176%22%5D%7D&s=1&r=1) bill that would double the size of USDA’s export program, falling in line with one of the hardwood sector’s top priorities.  Specifically, the legislation increases dollars for the Market Access Program (MAP) from $200 million to $400 million a year, and the Foreign Market Development (FMD) from $34.5 million to $69 million a year.  The bill’s champions include Sens. Angus King (I-ME), Joni Ernst (R-IA), Tina Smith (D-MN), Chuck Grassley (R-IA), Susan Collins (R-ME), as well as Reps. Dan Newhouse (R-WA), Jim Costa (D-CA), Tracey Mann (R-KS), Jimmy Panetta (D-CA), Ashley Hinson (R-IA), Kim Schrier (D-WA), Brad Finstad (R-MN) and Chellie Pingree (D-ME).

# Bipartisan Congressional Western Caucus Sounds Alarm Over Low Timber Harvests

# On January 31, Reps. Dan Newhouse (R-WA) and Derek Kilmer (D-WA) led a bipartisan [letter](https://westerncaucus.house.gov/uploadedfiles/1.31.23_usfs_timber_sale_program_-_final.pdf) to U.S. Forest Service Chief Randy Moore expressing concern about low timber harvests in Fiscal Year (FY) 2022, which witnessed an 11% decline from FY 2019.  The lawmakers point out that five sawmills located near the NFS have closed during the past three years, with more sawmills and forestry contractors facing similar challenges during the next year and a half.  Sixteen House Republicans and three Democrats co-signed the letter.