



USTR Extends China Tariffs Pending More Review

On September 2, the United States Trade Representative (USTR) [announced](#) that Section 301 tariffs on China would continue, pending further review of the trade sanctions, which cover various types of flooring, plywood and mouldings. In May 2022, USTR kicked off the [statutory four-year process](#) to review China tariffs by notifying industry reps of the possible termination of the tariffs and opportunity for industry to request continuation. Because USTR received more than 400 requests for continuation, the tariff actions have not terminated. USTR will provide details on the next steps in the four-year review process in subsequent notices.

Congress To Wrestle with Quick Fix Funding, Energy Project Wish-List

Beginning Monday, September 13, both chambers of Congress will be in Washington for a compressed legislative session to tackle Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 spending bills that will fund the federal government beyond September 30, the expiration date of the current fiscal year. Because of the narrow window, Congress will be forced once again to move a short-term spending bill, known as a "Continuing Resolution" (CR), to fund federal agencies beyond September 30 and through December 16, well beyond the November 8 election. Unfortunately, this quick fix could confront some roadblocks, including a so-called "rider" that would deliver some regulatory flexibility for energy projects, including reforms to the

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) reviews and fixes to the Clean Water Act permitting, as promised to Sen. Joe Manchin (D-WV) in exchange for his support for the “Inflation Reduction Act” passed in August. Text for the permitting bill could be available as early as this week.

USDA’s Next Steps on “Old Growth Forests”

As reported earlier, on July 15, 2022, the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) jointly published a [Federal Register notice](#) seeking public input on a “universal definition framework” for old-growth forests on federal land, setting the stage for an inventory for old growth and possible new restrictions on sustainable forestry. On August 30, the Hardwood Federation submitted [comments](#) on the proposal, outlining key arguments opposing a uniform definition, thereby creating a framework that would be unworkable. Although it’s unclear when the USFS will share details related to a new framework, the USFS informed industry reps in August that they hoped to share a final definition before they pivot to the inventory phase, likely no later than April 2023, based on the outlines of a related [Executive Order](#).