

2024 Deputy Administrator’s Safe Trade Award:
Lacey Act Program Team

The Lacey Act Program Team delivered the largest expansion in its program history—Phase VII—adding more than 200 new product codes to the import declaration requirement, which is three times more than all previous phases combined. It was announced and launched as a creative, multi-channel outreach campaign—including webinars, trade shows, even an interactive booth with a prize wheel and giveaways. They made sure industry understood the message: If you import wood and don’t yet file a Lacey Act declaration, you will with Phase VII. The impact is significant. Illegal timber trade is not just an environmental issue—it’s a global crime worth \$150 billion a year, the third most profitable transnational crime after drugs and money laundering. It fuels deforestation, species extinction, and even violent conflict. By expanding declaration requirements and enforcing penalties for false statements, this team cut off a major revenue stream for criminal organizations and protected U.S. producers who follow protocol. Additionally, they supported two major criminal prosecutions—rare for this program—resulting in significant prison sentences and tens of millions of dollars in fines and forfeitures. One case alone involved \$65 million worth of illegal plywood imports. That’s extraordinary work.

Team Members

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