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National Hardwood Lumber Association Expands Global Reach
New Office Opens in Shanghai, China

MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE – The National Hardwood Lumber Association officially opened its first overseas office on January 12th in Shanghai, China. Bob Sabistina, previous NHLA Inspector Training School Director and previous NHLA Chief Inspector, will oversee the Shanghai office. His work will be divided into three main areas:

- 1) Inspection services including grade inquiries on specific loads and dispute resolutions.
- 2) Teaching and training of US hardwood lumber grades to the growing list of consumers in China and Southeast Asia in cooperation with the American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC).
- 3) NHLA promotion and representation at industry meetings, tradeshow and various industry functions.

Mr. Sabistina has been working in Asia as a consultant for the American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC) since 2005, mainly conducting NHLA grading seminars. The move to a permanent office is a natural progression as the North American hardwood industry expands its search for hardwood lumber markets. “The success of reaching those markets is dependent upon the differentiation of North American hardwoods from the rest of the products,” explained NHLA Executive Director Mark Barford. “Our commitment to the Shanghai office shows our members, the industry and the global market that NHLA is moving forward with our new brand and refocused message – ‘Strong Roots. Global Reach.’”

The office will operate seasonally and is scheduled to be open from January 2009 until late spring. All international grade inquiries should be coordinated through NHLA Chief Inspector, Mark Horne. Mr. Horne can be reached by phone at 901-377-1818 or cell at 919-389-5089 or email at m.horne@nhla.com.

“The addition of the office in China allows us to serve our members on a worldwide basis,” Barford said. “I encourage members to contact me directly about how best we can use this asset to assist their business.”

Mark Barford, CAE, Executive Director can be contacted by email at m.barford@nhla.com. To contact Bob Sabistina regarding lumber grading seminars or NHLA promotion, please email him at b.sabistina@nhla.com.

The world’s largest and oldest hardwood industry association, NHLA represents 1400 companies and individuals that produce, use and sell North American hardwood lumber, or provide equipment, supplies or services to the hardwood industry. It was founded in 1898 to establish a uniform system of grading rules for the measurement and inspection of hardwood lumber. Since 1980, its headquarters have been in Memphis, Tenn. To learn more about NHLA, please visit www.nhla.com.

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