

## Mill rebounds by cutting timber for Asian buyers

(AP) — Warm Springs Forest Products Industries has returned to nearly full operation by switching to Asian markets after a layoff nearly shut its mill earlier this year.

Instead of cutting logs into lumber that's measured in board feet for U.S. customers, the company is cutting lumber measured in metrics for Asian buyers.

Warm Springs Forest Products laid off 57 of its 115 workers in April.

Several months ago, the mill reached an agreement with Boring-based Van Port International,

which began leasing the mill in July and selling the tribe's products to the international marketplace.

All but three have been re-hired and the company has boosted employment to 122 workers, said Ray Potter, chief financial officer for the Confederated Tribes.

Since the agreement was reached July 1, the mill has been operating at full capacity, with tribal members cutting logs for Van Port four days a week, 10 hours per day, according to mill officials.

"So far, it has been tremendous," Potter said. "It allows us to keep our people employed to continue to process our logs and get payments that we normally would for our timber. We were looking at severely scaled-down opportunities."

The agreement combines the Warm Springs Forest Products timber supply and its lumber mill operations with Van Port's marketing abilities, access to foreign markets and its ability to operate a mill according to Japanese and other Asian market standards, said Jim Everett, chief

financial officer for Van Port.

Under the agreement, the tribe continues to harvest timber from the tribal lands and bring logs to the mill, Everett said.

Van Port then purchases the logs at market prices and hires the mill to cut the logs into lumber for export, he said. "They are continuing their operations, but we are helping to train and manage the employees," Everett said. "The key thing is producing export lumber for the Japanese market. It is a market they had not accessed before."

## Community Action Team taking IDA applications

The Warm Springs Community Action Team is accepting applications for Individual Development Accounts. This program is free and open to everyone.

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