



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 26, 2021

Media Contact: John Kyte

318-243-4370

Hunt Forest Products, Tolko Industries Announce New Sawmill in Northwest Louisiana

RUSTON, LA – Hunt Forest Products and Tolko Industries Ltd. (Tolko) today announced that they will build a \$240 million, state-of-the-art sawmill in Bienville Parish, near Taylor, LA. Construction is expected to start in early 2022, and the new facility will employ approximately 60 people when operations begin in the first half of 2023. The sawmill will employ approximately 130 people when it is operating at full capacity.

“We are excited to be bringing our second high-tech sawmill, and the skilled jobs it will provide, to Louisiana, and to provide a local outlet for the massive inventory of southern yellow pine that exists in this state,” said James D. Hunt, co-owner and vice chairman of the Board of Directors of Hunt Forest Products.

The mill will prioritize buying timber locally, and it is estimated that the mill will require approximately 1.3 million tons of wood annually to produce approximately 320 million board feet of lumber annually, Hunt said. The facility will be located on approximately 255 acres of land including the existing Taylor sawmill site and some adjacent timber land.

Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards said the state strongly supports the project and is particularly pleased that the facility will be in Bienville Parish.

“This project is a great economic boost to the northwest part of the state, strategically located to have access to the heart of our historic timber industry, and it will help create hundreds of direct and indirect jobs across the construction, forestry, industrial services, and retail sectors in the town of Taylor and in Bienville Parish,” Edwards said.

Edwards also said that the Louisiana Department of Economic Development will be using the state’s nationally recognized LED FastStart® workforce development program, in coordination with Bossier Parish Community College (BPPC), to build and train the local skilled workforce the new state-of-the-art sawmill will need.

The new sawmill project is a joint venture between Hunt Forest Products and Tolko, a 60-year-old family-owned Canadian forestry industry company that produces a wide range of forest products for customers around the world. Tolko, based in Vernon, British Columbia, partnered with Hunt Forest Products to build a modern sawmill in Urania, LA, that began operations in 2018.

-more-

Similar to the Urania sawmill, Tolko will own a 50 percent share, and the mill will be managed and operated by Hunt on a day-to-day basis.

“Our first venture into the United States was in partnership with Hunt Forest Products, a family-owned company like ours, and that has been very successful,” said Brad Thorlakson, Tolko president and CEO. “So, we are looking forward to working with the Hunt family again to bring another state-of-the-art sawmill, and jobs, to Louisiana.”

William “Bill” Sims, president of the Bienville Parish Police Jury said Hunt Forest Products is working with the Parish community to coordinate services for the new mill, and to identify and address potential infrastructure issues.

“The forestry industry has been a vital part of the Bienville Parish and regional economy for more than 100 years, so we’re very pleased to be working with Hunt Forest Products and Tolko to bring a new and significant economic engine to our community,” Sims said.

“This new, state-of-the-art sawmill will make a notable impact in Bienville Parish,” said Justyn Dixon, president and CEO of the North Louisiana Economic Partnership. “We applaud Hunt Forest Products and Tolko Industries for recognizing that North Louisiana is a prime location for companies to grow and succeed. We gladly welcome this major investment in our region.”

“With the success of our mill in Urania, and the availability of timber and employees, we believe this project is in the right place, at the right time,” Hunt said. “This will boost the local economy, bring a new generation of sawmill technology to this part of the state, and provide another much-needed outlet for regional Louisiana timber. It’s a win-win for everyone.”

About Hunt Forest Products

Hunt Forest Products L.L.C. is a full service wood products company founded in 1978 with the purpose of providing quality products and superior service. We manufacture a variety of plywood, lumber, and other specialty wood products, and whatever the specification, we can meet your needs. Hunt Forest Products is a family owned and operated company practicing sustainable forestry, and we are certified by the American Tree Farm System and APA – The Engineered Wood Association. For more information: <http://www.huntforpro.com/>

About Tolko

Tolko is a leading manufacturer of a wide range of forest products for customers around the world, including lumber, plywood and veneer oriented strand board co-products, biomass power and a growing number of specialty wood products. For more than 60 years, our family-owned company has delivered reliability, flexibility, efficiency and quality. We hold third-party certification on the forestlands we sustainably manage in British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan, and we play an active role in the communities where our employees live and work. For more information: <http://tolko.com/>

###