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## Judge dismisses lawsuit over lumber pact payments

A judge in Seattle has thrown out a lawsuit against the federal government over the distribution of money from a U.S.-Canada softwood lumber agreement.

U.S. District Judge Richard A. Jones ruled on Tuesday that three conservation groups lack standing.

Forest Stewardship Council-United States, Conservation Northwest and the Center for Biological Diversity filed suit in September against the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, Commerce Department and U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

The groups challenged the distribution of \$350 million in payments from Canada to timber groups chosen by the government.

Jones writes that the groups failed to show they were entitled to compete for the funds, that they had been damaged or that the payments led to any environmental damage.

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