

## Celebrating ten years of sustainability reporting

Wallabies on the edge

Volunteer programs grow

Safety achievements  
recognised





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## from the chief executive

Our tenth *Seeing Report* was released in December 2007, and I am thrilled to say that it was once again well-received by our customers, staff, forest users and other stakeholders. Sustaining all forest values now and into the future is a challenge for responsible forest managers across the globe. Forests NSW is proud to lead the way in sustainable forest management and take our reporting to the community very seriously. Read more about our achievements on pages 10 and 11.

This *Bush Telegraph* edition also demonstrates the social benefits our State forests provide to the community. The Highland Fling mountain bike marathon again raced through the State forests of the Southern Highlands (pg 6), while our State forests on the North Coast played a part in training exercises for the defence force (pg 4). The construction and maintenance of recreational trails and facilities used by the community could not be managed without the efforts of the volunteer programs (pg 4).

Our environmental responsibilities for fire management and control are demonstrated by staff improving their mapping and navigation skills (pg 7) and through the hazard reduction burn of our urban-based Cumberland State Forest (pg 9).

Though this summer has brought hot weather, it was kind in providing the state with much needed rain. Staff were prepared and trained ready to combat any unpredictable bushfire that may have entered our pine plantations and native forests around the state, but have enjoyed the season of respite.



Nick Roberts  
Chief Executive



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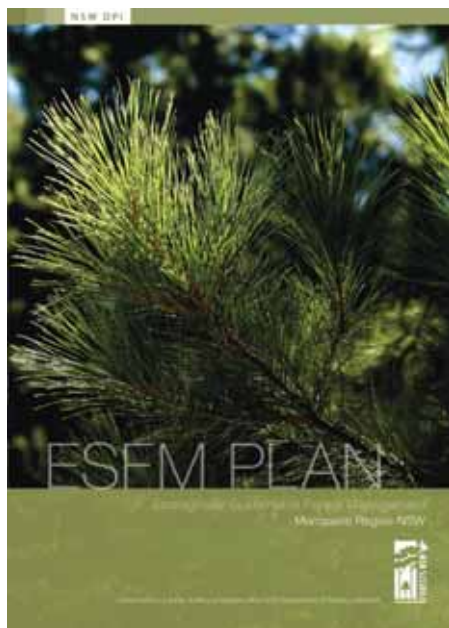
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**Cover photograph** Not only are brush-tailed wallabies living on the edge of rocky ledges, but they are also on the endangered species list. See page 14 for story.  
 Photo by Howard Spencer/Forests NSW Image Library

# New plans for native and planted forests



The Macquarie Plan is one of the six new plans demonstrating how Forests NSW will manage State forests from 2008-2013

Forests NSW has released Ecologically Sustainable Forest Management (ESFM) plans for its native forests in the Western and Riverina regions and for planted forests in the South West slopes, Monaro, Central West and Northern Tablelands regions.

Forests NSW forester, Heath Frewin, said the plans cover the next five years and are intended to provide clear information to the people of NSW on how their forests are being managed.

"The plans demonstrate Forests NSW commitment to sustainability, as both a profitable enterprise and a land management agency, and are integral to maintaining certification under the internationally recognised Australian Forestry Standard," Heath said.

"The plans recognise that native forests provide a wide range of environmental benefits to the community and that their management should be based on sustainable management principles."

Heath said the plans covered management of forest values such as biodiversity, soil and water, recreation, carbon storage and Aboriginal cultural heritage.

"These plans promote nature conservation and forest health, while sustaining timber production and economic and social development," Heath said.

The plans set out the broad strategies, performance indicators and measurable outcomes for planted forest management in each region during the next five years.

Heath said public submissions were incorporated into the final plans.

Copies of the plans can be found on the Forests NSW website [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/forests](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/forests) or in hard copy by contacting Forests NSW regional offices.

– Howard Spencer

Public Affairs & Media, Coffs Harbour

# Forests NSW hosts leaders in forestry

The efforts of Forests NSW in establishing plantations on former mine sites and for carbon sequestration were under the spotlight last year during a field trip in conjunction with a Forestry and Forest Products Committee (FFPC) meeting in Newcastle.

Forests NSW chief executive, Nick Roberts, hosted the two-day meeting of leaders of forestry and land management agencies from around Australia.

FFPC is one of four committees that report to the Commonwealth Government Primary Industries Standing Committee and Ministerial Council.

During the field visit to the Hunter Valley, members inspected Forests NSW's extensive seed orchard and plantation species trials at Rixs Creek.

FFPC meets twice each year and is hosted on a rotational basis by each state and territory.

Day one involved the formal meeting of the group where many items relating to the role of forests in sustainable landscapes, policy and industry development were considered.

The field visit included presentations by Forests NSW tree improvement manager, Michael Henson, and a research officer from NSW



Department of Primary Industries (DPI) science and research division, Dr Georgina Kelly.

The group also inspected Xstrata's open cut coal mine where they were given an insight into the ongoing extensive community consultation process undertaken by mine

management on the mine's activities and a topical talk on clean coal technology by Dr Nicole Williams, chief executive officer of the NSW Minerals Council.

– Ann Denlow Office of the CEO, Sydney

Forests NSW tree improvement manager, Michael Henson (left), and Rix's Creek Mine manager, John Hindmarsh (centre) provided information on mine rehabilitation to Forests NSW chief executive, Nick Roberts, (second left) and members of the FFPC. *Photo by Steve Boyton*

# Air force exercise in the forest

State forests along the North Coast played part in an air war last November, but most people would not have noticed.

And that is probably how the Department of Defence wanted it.

Wedding Bells State Forest west of Woolgoolga and Kiwarrak State Forest near Wauchope were conscripted to play host to communications posts during the East Coast Air Defence Exercise, ECADEX 07.

The exercise provided Air Force personnel with a chance to hone their air defence skills in a real life scenario, with the creation of 'opposing forces' as part of the exercise.

Conducted from RAAF Base Williamtown and RAAF Base Amberley, ECADEX featured a variety of aircraft, including F-111C strike and Learjet aircraft, as well as Hawk and F/A-18 Hornet fighter aircraft. A Boeing 707T tanker aircraft also took part, alongside the Navy's HMAS Parramatta and a torpedo recovery vessel.

"It was also the tenth year that the Department of Defence and Forests NSW have collaborated on these biennial exercises," said the manager of non-defence training areas in NSW, Major Mark Walton.

"This year we had communications installations at Nobbys Lookout in Wedding Bells State Forest and Breakneck Hill in Kiwarrak State Forest."

Major Walton said Forests NSW provided venues for a range of defence activities, from recreation to sites for high end technical training and standard military training.

"The 41st Battalion Royal NSW Regiment frequently uses the State forests on the North Coast for exercises and training," Major Walton said.

"We generally follow the bushwalking code: we take nothing but photographs and leave nothing but footprints, and some of the units don't even leave footprints."

– Howard Spencer Public Affairs & Media, Coffs Harbour

Below: Sgt David Dempsey of the Royal Australian Air Force and community forester David Wilson of Forests NSW North East Region at the Nobbys Lookout communications site in Wedding Bells State Forest. Photo by Howard Spencer



# 'Communities in Forests' program continues to grow

Teaming up in 2004, Conservation Volunteers Australia and Forests NSW established a community involvement program called 'Communities in Forests'. Now in its fifth year, the list of program achievements continue to grow, including increasing the network of trails in State forests by approximately 5.5km and planting 300 trees.



Forests NSW community programs manager, Sally Arundell, said Forests NSW recognises that without the help of volunteers, much of this work could not be undertaken.

During 2007, volunteer efforts concentrated on the construction and maintenance of recreational trails in State forests around Tumut and the Southern Highlands. Several project weeks were spent on recreational facilities and constructing trails in Wingello State Forest. As well as constructing around 3km of mountain bike trails, the volunteers also built a bridge and installed marker posts along the track.

"The trail construction work has enabled major mountain bike riding events such as the Highland fling and sled dog racing organisations to use the expanded network," Sally said.

"There are some great new projects planned for 2008 including an upgrade and environmental rehabilitation work of the popular Yadboro Flat camping area, situated on the banks of the Clyde River on the picturesque south coast near Ulladulla.

"Maintenance works are also planned along the Wootton historical railway walk near Bulahdelah on the mid north coast, along with continuing work on the popular Tumut recreational trail," Sally said.

Anyone interested in volunteering in 2008, can email [susannah.kable@sf.nsw.gov.au](mailto:susannah.kable@sf.nsw.gov.au)

– Susannah Kable  
Community Programs, Sydney

Top: Volunteers in the 'Communities in Forests' program working on the construction of the mountain bike trail for major mountain bike riding events in the Wingello State Forest. Photo by Conservation Volunteers Australia



## Stunning NSW flooring timbers showcased at new centre

Visitors to the new Glasshouse Entertainment Centre taking shape in Port Macquarie will be stepping out on a practical showcase of the new generation of Forests NSW flooring timbers.

Forests NSW Central Region donated the highland species timber for the sprung floors of the studio, mezzanine foyer and the level three gallery.

"The timber consists of highland species from the upper part of the Hastings River and includes New England blackbutt, messmate, ribbon gum, silvertop stringy bark and diehard stringy bark," said Forests NSW Central Region manager, Kathy Jones.

"This will introduce people to the advantages of these timbers, especially for flooring and internal use, where they are best suited.

"Highland species will be increasingly a part of the timber mix offered from Central Region forests and it is important for the sustainability of our coastal species to extend the use of these timbers into the market," said Kathy.

"These are absolutely stunning timbers which create beautiful flooring. We want people to get to know these timbers and to begin asking for them to be included in their homes as internal feature timbers.

"Using these timbers will supplement the supply from our coastal forests and ensure we have a sustainable timber supply into the future," she said.

The Glasshouse project will take 100 cubic metres of timber donated by Forests NSW.

Australian Solar Timbers at Kempsey has donated the processing, drying and delivery of the final product.

– **Howard Spencer** Public Affairs & Media, Coffs Harbour

Above: An artists' impression of the interior of the completed Glasshouse that will include a 620-tiered seat theatre, 600 square metres of regional art gallery space, café, office space, conference rooms and community facilities.

## Environmentally friendly hardwood flooring



Kempsey-based Australian Solar Timbers (AST) has become the first Australian mainland hardwood flooring manufacturer to be accredited under the Australian Forestry Standard Chain of Custody Certification Scheme.

AST's high quality Australian native timber flooring can now carry the certification mark that provides consumers with the

assurance that they are buying wood from sustainably managed Australian forests.

"Certification combined with our use of solar energy to power our timber drying kilns shows AST's commitment to the environment and sustainability and makes AST one of Australia's most environmentally-friendly timber companies," said AST marketing manager David Head.

"Our product range includes 19mm end matched strip flooring, TimberLay 12mm overlay flooring and solid block parquetry.

"AST produces 16 different species of Northern NSW timbers unique in their beauty and hardness and makes them ideal for flooring," he said.

AST employs more than 90 people at its state-of-the-art mill at Kempsey and distributes its products nationally through a range of independent distributors in each mainland state.

"AST is proud of its Chain of Custody accreditation and to have the opportunity to promote sustainability in the hardwood forest industry in Australia," AST general manager Tracy Goss said.

AST sources the majority of its timber from Forests NSW and has a wide range of species available under the independently audited Chain of Custody certification.

– **Howard Spencer** Public Affairs & Media, Coffs Harbour

Left to right: Chairman of the Australian Forestry Standard board, Geoff Gorrie, chief executive of Forests NSW, Nick Roberts, and the managing director of AST, Dr Douglas Head, at the certification presentation at AST in November. Photo by Howard Spencer

# Sustainability indicators around the world

Twelve countries, representing 60 percent of the world's forests, met together at the 18th meeting of the Montréal Process working group, held in Argentina in November, 2007.

The working group was formed in 1994 to develop internationally consistent criteria and indicators for the conservation and sustainable management of temperate and boreal forests.

Forests NSW regulations and systems manager, Kris Gounder, attended with the support from the Forestry and Forests Products Committee.

"I provided the working group with our perspective on the implementation and reporting of sustainability under the Montréal Process criteria and indicators," Kris said.

"Forests NSW sustainability reporting is highly regarded. Countries showed keen interest on how we use one dataset to respond to multiple reporting requirements and that the report is externally verified.

The working group approved new criteria one to six, technical notes and agreed to consider criteria seven at the next meeting. Australia will be releasing the 2008 State of the Forest report in March this year, which is based on the new approved indicators.

"Forests NSW is progressing towards incorporating the new indicators for all future sustainability reporting to ensure this set of indicators meets both the regulatory and non regulatory reporting requirements," Kris said.

The working group's field trip demonstrated the significant growth rates of *Eucalyptus grandis*. Between 1980 and 1993 new provenances were introduced, with 120 to 179 open-pollinated families from NSW being introduced in 1991-92.

"It was exciting to witness the performance of the trees from NSW compared to the other countries' seed lots," Kris said.

– Kylie Davies Communications, Sydney



Kris Gounder (second left) and working group delegates admiring the performance of the provenance (red tape) from NSW Kendall management area.



## Fling through the forests

About 140mm of rain fell, but cleared just in time, to allow riders to drop and the course to dry for the third Highland Fling mountain bike marathon at Bundanoon in November.

Forests NSW is a sponsor of the event which attracted 1300 riders who flung themselves down the trails in the Half Fling (55km), Full Fling (110km) or Flinging Threesomes.

The beauty of the Fling is the variety of the course – the native forest, pine plantation, open farmland and village roads.

The course ran through the pine plantations at Penrose State Forest and also Wingello State Forest where there is a permanent single mountain bike track through the native trees.

This track was built during the past two years by volunteers from Conservation Volunteers Australia and members of the local mountain bike club.

Forests NSW supervising forest officer in the region, Grahame North, said the event gave riders a good look at an operational pine plantation where clear fall and replanting was underway.

"I think the riders really appreciated having access to the forests and they took on board that this renewable resource can be used for recreational and commercial purposes," he said.

Grahame said the forest roads and singles tracks were ideal for this type of event.

"We are working hard to make sure the forests are managed for commercial, recreational and heritage values," he said.

– Sarah Chester Public Affairs & Media, Albury

Top: Riders tackled some tricky water crossings at this year's Highland Fling. Photo by Dave Bateman

# Foresters grow 'cedar cutter' moustaches

If the cedar cutters of old had this team around they might have enjoyed better health.

The modern day Cedar Cutters are from Forests NSW North East Region, Resources branch and Native Forests Operation who joined thousands of men in raising money for men's health charities by growing moustaches.

From the money raised by the Region, John Willoughby topped the tally, followed closely by Pete Simon.

The team consisted of all in the photo, and Alan 'Simmo' Simmons.

"The photo afternoon was a result of numerous morning tea discussions, tossing around ideas for a theme," said organiser Matt Dobson from the ecology unit.

"We decided that the theme would be 'The Cedar Cutters', linking with our forestry past.

"Discussions have already taken place for next year's theme."

Movember is a charity event held during November each year.

At the start of Movember guys register with a clean shaven face. The Movember participants known as Mo Bros then have the remainder of the month to grow and groom their moustache and along the way raise as much money and awareness about male health issues as possible.

Organisers say men lack awareness about the very real health issues they face and often have a 'she'll be right' attitude.

The aim of Movember is to change these attitudes, make male health fun by putting the Mo back on the face of fashion and in the process raise some serious funds for key male health issues, including prostate cancer and male depression.

– Howard Spencer

Public Affairs & Media, Coffs Harbour

Stump: Peter Simon; Back row left to right: Adrien Thompson, Rob Kirwood, Brian Tolhurst, Steve Pickering, Dale McLean, Dean Kearney; Front row left to right: Jamie Bertram, Matt Dobson, Bob Aspden, Tim Parkes, John Willoughby, Rob Lloyd. *Photo by Howard Spencer*



## Course hones mapping skills for fire

More than 20 Forests NSW field staff and casuals attended a two-day map reading and navigation course at Bombala in December to hone their skills for the fire season.

Forests NSW fire equipment and technology officer, Steve Brown, said accurate mapping and navigation skills were important when dealing with day to day work such as harvesting and fire fighting.

"Map reading is particularly significant as many forests' roads are not marked on conventional maps," Steve said.

Steve said one of the practical points covered by the course conducted by Forests NSW fire management branch was the location of water points close to the fire.

"We check the accuracy of maps and identify additional water

points that may not have been identified on the maps," Steve said.

"In drought times some of these water points dry up and should be checked before the fire season," Steve said.

As part of the course, staff located water points on the maps to see if they could access them with either a slip-on unit on the back of a four-wheel drive or a fire tanker.

Forests NSW resource protection and infrastructure manager, Jason Vincent, said Forests NSW fire management branch's input into fire planning for the Monaro region is important in protecting the forests assets.

"The course was very timely as we were about to roll out our new fire mapping atlas to enhance Forests NSW response capability," Jason said.

– Sarah Chester Public Affairs & Media, Albury

# Soil and water training helps protect forests

More than 2000 people have now been accredited in Forest Soil and Water Protection, through courses run by the TAFE NSW Riverina Institute Forest Industry Training Centre based at Tumut.

Accreditation in this course is a requirement of the Forest Operator's Licence, enabling operators to work in State forests.

Key course attendees include Forests NSW staff and contractors associated with operations in timber harvesting, roading, haulage and site preparation.



"It relates to essential environmental care aspects of soil and water protection and other important conservation values," David Priem, manager of the TAFE Forest Industry Training Centre, said.

"The course has been running for 11 years and is now a well established part of the training scene."

Three people deliver the course across the State, aided by the much appreciated support and expertise of Forests NSW staff in the regions.

The course involves a day of theory, covering environmental legislation, plan interpretation, and best practice environmental care techniques according to the operational elective they are undertaking.

The theory is followed by a half day field trip and workplace assessment to gauge competence.

"There has been an obvious improvement in attitude and understanding by people who work in our State forests in relation to the way they approach environmental aspects of their work.

"They understand the need for training and genuinely appreciate learning how to best apply soil and water protection techniques as part of their day to day operations," David said.

– Sarah Chester Public Affairs & Media, Albury

Forests NSW dozer driver, Graham Salmon; supervising forestry officer, Ray Claffey; and forester, Adele Wedding inspect a road drainage structure near Tumut as part of a workplace assessment for the roading elective of the Forests Soil and Water Protection course. *Photo by David Priem*

# Thinning white cypress for the future

Forests NSW is gearing up to ensure households around New South Wales have access to the highly regarded white cypress timber 40 years down the track.

That will be about the time that the cypress being thinned over the next year will be ready for milling, as this hardy and termite resistant species is extremely slow growing.

"Western Region of Forests NSW manages about 530000 hectares of white cypress pine forests throughout the western slopes and plains of NSW in accordance with the principles of Ecological Sustainable Forest Management," said Forests NSW Western Region operations and protection manager, Don Nicholson.

"An essential element of the management of productive white cypress forests includes thinning of the dense natural white cypress regeneration, to permit growth of trees and enhance forest biodiversity.

"If it is not thinned the cypress regeneration remains very small and dense, of little use for timber production and too dense for natural wildlife habitat."

Forests NSW has engaged contractors to participate in a mechanical 'non-commercial thinning' of cypress regeneration using chopper rollers towed by tractors in strips to remove about 40 per cent of the thick cypress regeneration.

Larger trees of all species are avoided and retained.

The 'bays' of thick regeneration left standing will be thinned using the traditional method of brushcutting to a six metre by six metre spacing.

"This year Western Region expects to treat about 4000 hectares of white cypress pine forest in Baradine, Dubbo, and Forbes forestry centres," Don said.

The first phase of the thinning operation is expected to be finished by June. The overall program is expected to continue for a further two years.

– Howard Spencer Public Affairs & Media, Coffs Harbour



# Hazard reduction burn for Sydney's only urban forest



It is not an ordinary day in an urban forest for rangers to be conducting a hazard reduction burn, but it is an important part in its management.

After an extensive planning process, Forests NSW conducted a hazard reduction (HR) burn during mid October 2007 in Cumberland State Forest, located in the heart of suburban West Pennant Hills. It was the first HR burning operation to be carried out within Cumberland State Forest in the last five years.

As with any hazard reduction burning, it was crucial that the operation was conducted under suitable conditions to ensure a safe and effective burn.

The planning process involved undertaking a thorough risk assessment, environmental impact assessment and collecting measurement data including fuel moisture levels. Monitoring of the weather patterns in the weeks leading up to the burn and the strategic organisation of fire fighting crews and vehicles was part of the planning too.

The HR operation was undertaken by a team of Forests NSW staff, and around 20 fire fighters from the NSW Fire Brigade and the NSW Rural Fire Service.

It was carried out in a key strategic area for the protection of neighbouring properties, and the forest itself, from a potential wildfire.

"There are many benefits of low intensity planned burns. Property protection is a huge priority, but it also plays an important role in assisting the natural regeneration of the forest," said Mandy Flaxman, acting Sydney forests manager.

"Many of our native species rely on fire to release their seeds, and after a fire, the ash provides an ideal growing base full of nutrients.

"We had perfect conditions for the burn, and plenty of rain to follow up, promoting new growth throughout the burnt areas."

The HR burn in Cumberland State Forest was different to HR operations carried out in any other Forests NSW region of NSW, due to the significant infrastructure and number of properties surrounding the forest.

"We had to notify the RTA, M2 Motorway, police and ambulance service, and the local councils, as well as 300 neighbours, including the IBM Corporate Centre. It was certainly not your average burn," Mandy said.

Further burns are planned for Cumberland State Forest as part of its overall Plan of Management, which will help maintain a low risk of bushfires and a healthy forest for everyone to enjoy.

– Sally Arundell, Manager Community Programs, Sydney

Top left and centre: The Rural Fire Service assisted in the HR burn. The use of low intensity fire in specifically targeted areas of the forest was carefully controlled and monitored by fire fighting personnel, vehicles and equipment. *Photos by Steve Brown.* Top right: Forests NSW community programs manager, Sally Arundell and forest ranger, Jose Orellana, assisted in controlling the burn. *Photo by Mandy Flaxman*

# On target

## Celebrating ten years of sustainability reporting

It is not every organisation that can boast about being ahead of the game, but Forests NSW, a Government Trading Enterprise, is doing just that.

The tenth *Seeing Report*, released in December 2007, chronicles Forests NSW's performance in four key areas of operation: social, environmental, economic and sustainability.

"As the New South Wales Government forest steward, Forests NSW is committed to operating the business and managing forests in a way that is environmentally sensitive, socially beneficial and economically viable," said the compiler of the report, certification officer Morgan Roche.

"In achieving this goal Forests NSW not only meets but actually exceeds regulatory requirements.

"This achievement is evidenced through Forests NSW accreditation to the Australian Forestry Standard, internationally recognised under the Program for Endorsement of Forestry Certification Standards.

"Additionally, the accreditation of our Environment Management System to ISO 14001, which uses the four-step continual improvement cycle: plan-do-check-act, means that we now have an effective way of identifying and implementing improvement opportunities over time."

Milestones of the past year have also included the amalgamation of the former Mid North Coast and Hunter Regions into Central Region, and the former Southern and South East Regions into the Southern Region.

Forests NSW manages just under two million hectares of native forests.

State forests are predominantly coastal eucalypt forest and smaller areas of red gum in the State's south-west and cypress pine in the State's central west. Of this area, approximately 2.9 percent is harvested annually to supply timber to industry and the community.

In addition, Forests NSW manage approximately half a million hectares of forest plantations, which incorporates both softwood and hardwood areas.

The majority of the softwood plantation estate is comprised of radiata pine plantations in the highlands to the west of the Great Dividing Range and the hardwood areas consist of eucalypt plantations, predominantly located on the NSW north coast.

About nine percent of total forests in NSW are managed as multiple use forests (allowing for harvest), with more than 16 percent being managed as nature conservation reserves, within State forests. The remaining forests are managed as leasehold and private tenures.

"The New South Wales Government is currently the third largest plantation owner in Australia, with a significant amount of timber sourced from the plantation estate managed by Forests NSW," Morgan said.

"Most of the consumer demand for sawn timber and panel board products in NSW is met from our own multiple use forests.

"Meeting domestic demand for timber from local sources is viewed by Forests NSW as a positive contribution to the sustainability of the world's forests, achieved through best practice forest management and regulation in NSW.

"These harvested and regrowing forests also assist with the challenge of climate change by acting as carbon sinks."





Forests NSW recreation and tourism policy and strategy document; *Living, working, playing... forests 2005-2009* was developed following a thorough consultative process.

It continues to provide a successful framework for recreation, sport, tourism and training within State forests.

"Consistent with a need for continued improvement, Forests NSW has developed an improved system to identify new stakeholders and update existing stakeholder information," Morgan said.

"This system enables efficient and systematic engagement with stakeholders in a range of forest management issues at various levels, such as prescribed burns.

"Forests NSW regional offices continue to be the first point of contact for stakeholders' concerns, with an estimated 1000 enquiries handled. It is these regional offices that dealt with the bulk of the 198 complaints received, all but one of which were successfully resolved."

The Githabul People of north-eastern NSW gained recognition of their native title rights in NSW with the registration of their indigenous land use agreement.

The agreement with the NSW Government, including Forests NSW, relates to over 11 000 hectares of national parks and State forests in the Kyogle, Woodenbong and Tenterfield area.

"This means that the Githabul People will be consulted on the management of 13 State forests, including agreement on how some of the native title rights will be exercised, such as restrictions on hunting," Morgan said.

Forests NSW continues to deliver formal education programs to teachers and pupils, with a total expenditure on public education of \$4.2 million in 2006-07.

"This program aims to show the wonders of State forests and to explain ecologically sustainable forest management, with 5853 school pupils participating in activities held in

Cumberland and Strickland State Forests," Morgan said.

Staff working in softwood plantations around Bombala continued to set the example of working safely while maintaining a strong commercial focus. The region has not recorded any lost time due to accidents for the past four years, totalling 50 000 hours.

State forests offer the public a wide range of opportunities for recreation, from camping to rogaining (long distance cross-country navigation).

To help the public enjoy State forests, a revised edition of the popular *Best Bush Map*, a guide to recreational opportunities on all public lands in NSW, was published this year jointly by Forests NSW, other land management agencies and Tourism NSW.

"It is only when you see a list of achievements published at one time, such as in the *Seeing Report*, that you realise what an enormous amount is achieved in the space of a year by what is a reasonably small agency," Morgan said.

The *Seeing Report* can be viewed and downloaded from the website [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/forests](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/forests) or for a hardcopy contact our Forests NSW Information Centre on Ph: 1300 655 687.

– Howard Spencer

Public Affairs & Media, Coffs Harbour

*Within the Seeing Report, Forests NSW reports on their performance in sustainable forest management, including recreation activities, carbon stored in plantations, forest products and fire protection. Photos Forests NSW Image Library. Created image of dartboard by Libero Design*

# Safety achievements recognised



It would be true to say that Forests NSW new CEO, Nick Roberts, has a passion for safety.

He has made it his mission to improve safety and make sure that everyone in the organisation shares that responsibility.

"It is about developing a belief that accidents are preventable and an incident free workplace is achievable," Nick said.

Forests NSW has long recognised safety achievements and its premier award in this area is the John O'Rourke Safety Award.

John O'Rourke was appointed in 1972 as Forests NSW full-time safety officer responsible for instituting the first detailed recording system for accidents statistics and promoting safety as a leading management issue.

The award was initiated upon John's retirement in 1981 to recognise his contribution to safety management.

Forests NSW health and safety manager, Christine Di Bella, considered it important to maintain the history of John O'Rourke and the award, so with the assistance of operations and fire manager Western Region, Don Nicholson, who provided the history of John O'Rourke, she was able to embellish the history in a framed certificate.

"The certificate symbolises the large piece of wood that was traditionally transferred from workplace winner to workplace winner," Christine said.

This year's award has been broadened to go to the workplace judged as having the best safety record and making a significant contribution to safety innovation in their local workplace or within Forests NSW as a whole.

Top: Forests NSW's Central Region has reviewed haulage operations and created an award winning road safety strategy.

Central Region is the recipient of this year's award for its 'Rural Roads Safety Strategy' and the hard work undertaken by the new combined Health and Safety Committee.

Christine said Central Region was located in a large area with a rapidly expanding population and faced some unique challenges in relation to haulage operations.

An example is the township of Kendall, south west of Port Macquarie, which is located on one of the major haulage routes used from harvesting operations.

Christine said following the death of a child injured by a car after being dropped off by a school bus in 2006, the community's safety expectations were raised.

"Central Region log merchandising staff undertook a review of haulage operations conducted through Kendall with the aim of improving safety not only for haulage operations but for other road users," Christine said.

Following extensive consultation, a road safety strategy was developed which included effective management of UHF communication between buses and trucks; providing haulage information to bus companies; incorporating school bus route information into haulage contractor site safety plans; and reducing truck movements by increasing the proportion of high productivity vehicles such as B-doubles.

Christine congratulated Central Region on all its hard work which she said showed that John O'Rourke's legacy was in good hands.

– Sarah Chester  
Public Affairs & Media,  
Albury

## Tackling log truck safety

Forests NSW has appointed Andrew Nicholls to the position of log truck safety manager for a six-month period following a series of log truck incidents.

His appointment follows on from the establishment of a Truck Safety Implementation Team led by Forests NSW regional manager, Bob Germanitse.

The team will investigate and recommend initiatives to improve the safety performance and perception of the heavy haulage industry across Forests NSW State-wide operations.

Andrew, a forester and formerly a road manager and safety officer, will coordinate and implement the team's recommendations.

He said a big part of his role would be in working with all heavy vehicle operators to help the entire forestry sector realise the very slim margins for error faced by truck drivers. "In particular, I will be working to change habits and introduce a few simple checks to greatly improve truck driver safety," Andrew said.

Photos by David Barnes/  
Forests NSW Image Library.  
Photo montage by Libero Design

# Exotic bark beetle

## turns nasty in pine plantations

Can you imagine a tiny beetle being able to kill a big tree? This is currently happening in pine plantations in NSW, and scientists from NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) are researching ways to reduce its impact. Dr Angus Carnegie explains.



The exotic North American bark beetle, *Ips grandicollis*, was accidentally introduced into Australia in the 1940s and was first found in NSW pine plantations in the early 1980s.

In NSW it is generally thought of as a secondary pest, attacking recently-felled logs and trees that have been stressed or damaged, such as by fire, wind or lightning. This tree mortality tends to be to a small number of localised trees.

*Ips* beetles commonly live and breed in fresh logging debris, and on rare occasions have caused damage to seedlings and young trees established within, or adjacent to, recently logged areas.

However, *Ips* numbers have recently increased and are now causing large scale tree mortality and have the potential to kill newly planted seedlings.

In several State forests near Tumut and Tumbarumba there has been a population explosion of *Ips* and it has reached outbreak proportions.

For the first time in NSW, *Ips* have been associated with large scale tree mortality of drought-stressed pine trees. Trees from eight to 30 years old have been killed.

What has caused this change in beetle behaviour? The prolonged dry condition has made trees susceptible to attack. Climate change may also have triggered optimum conditions for the beetle, giving milder temperatures during spring and autumn, allowing the beetles to breed for longer.

NSW DPI forest health survey unit had mapped plantations by mid-2007 using the Forests NSW Squirrel helicopter. Several thousand hectares were mapped as having some level of damage from *Ips*.

Remote sensing technology is currently being used to more accurately map the damaged area within Green Hills State Forest, near Tumbarumba, including satellite imagery as well as airborne digital cameras.

*Ips* beetles are also disrupting the biological control program of another exotic insect, *Sirex* woodwasp (*Sirex noctilio*). *Sirex* attack and kill stressed trees and have the potential to cause large scale tree mortality.

Many years of research in Australia has led to the *Sirex* Control Strategy, which includes biological control: a group of pine trees are treated (trap trees) to attract *Sirex* and then the biological control agent (a nematode) is introduced into the trees and this effectively sterilises the wasps. However, in recent years *Ips* have also been attracted to the trap trees as well, causing problems for the biological control program.

Scientists in NSW DPI, in conjunction with Forests NSW, are currently trialing insect pheromones and synthetic tree compounds to deter *Ips* from attacking *Sirex* trap trees.

The fire, in December 2006, that burnt 8500 hectares of the Buccleuch State Forest, near Tumut, saw *Ips* bark beetle populations increase dramatically to outbreak proportions in the fire-damaged stands, due to ample feeding material of burnt trees and conducive climate conditions.

There is concern that newly planted seedlings established within the burnt areas will be attacked and killed by bark beetles. Scientists from NSW DPI, in conjunction with Forests NSW and Bayer, are trialing a pill that combines an insecticide and fertiliser to manage this problem.

– Dr Angus Carnegie  
Forest Health Management, Sydney



Inset: Aerial photo taken of a pine plantation in Hume Region, showing the extent of trees attacked. Right: The tiny *Ips* bark beetle finds dry drought conditions ideal, which has resulted in an increase in tree mortality. Photos by Dr Angus Carnegie



# Wallabies

They are small furry and cute. And they are also living on the edge in more ways than one.

They are brush-tailed rock wallabies, and count yourself lucky if you have seen one in recent years.

Brush-tailed rock wallabies are on the endangered species list in New South Wales, and are considered vulnerable nationally.

This small but agile species has become somewhat of a specialist in the habitat it favours, and while it might be inhospitable to people who find the usually steep cliffs the wallabies call home hard going, it is not so difficult for its greatest predator, the red fox.

"Forests NSW has been monitoring populations of these animals for some time, and is an active participant in the fox threat abatement plan," said Forests NSW Central Region ecologist, Adam Fawcett.

"The brush-tailed rock wallaby is known to exist from Queensland to Victoria, usually associated with escarpments along the Great Dividing Range.

"But over time their preferred habitat has become fragmented, if not lost altogether through various means.



# living on the edge



"We find them in the sandstone cliffs along the escarpment in areas such as the Pokolbin State Forest, and Heaton State Forest near Cessnock.

"They like areas with caves, fissures and ledges, and they come out to browse on grass and vegetation nearby."

But according to Adam, the effect of land clearing has forced these animals to retreat to core refuge habitat, making them highly susceptible to the effects of predation by foxes, and to competition for food from introduced species such as goats.

They also live in small family units, so losses have a high impact on the viability of the groups, which recent studies have suggested can have noticeable genetic differences between populations just several hundred metres apart.

Adam and forest assistant, Alf Britton, have been helping the NSW Department of Environment and Climate Change (DECC) in a recent relocation project to shore up a population of rock wallabies at Kangaroo Valley as part of the Shoalhaven Brush-tailed Rock Wallaby Protection Program.

This involved catching two males and a female from the Pokolbin area, where monitoring had suggested there was a thriving community, to add to the Kangaroo Valley site where it was believed only one female was surviving.

"We captured nine animals over a two-day and night program," Adam said.

"The animals were all weighed and micro chipped, and the three selected for relocation were fitted with radio collars so their movements can be tracked over time.

"Ongoing surveys by Forests NSW as part of the Brush-tailed Rock Wallaby draft recovery plan have identified several healthy colonies in the Hunter Valley.

"This has allowed us to assist with the recovery of rock wallabies in Kangaroo Valley.

"Since release, ongoing monitoring by DECC has suggested the Hunter Valley animals are settling nicely into their new home down south. Meanwhile we will be monitoring the colonies they came from to ensure there is no detrimental impact on Hunter capture sites and these colonies remain healthy."

Visitors to the Heaton Lookout in Heaton State Forest will also have a good chance of seeing one of the wallabies early in the morning or late in the afternoon as they emerge from their rocky crevices to feed.

"The wallabies often sun themselves on rocky shelves on the cliff faces, and Heaton is probably one of the easiest areas to access to see these animals in their natural habitat," Adam said.

– Howard Spencer Public Affairs & Media, Coffs Harbour

Above: A brush-tailed rock wallaby near the cliff top in Pokolbin State Forest early in the morning. Top right: Forests NSW Central Region ecologist, Adam Fawcett, points out elements of the Pokolbin State Forest habitat used by brush-tailed rock wallabies to DECC technical officer, Alison Prentice and project officer, Melinda Norton. Top left: It is a blur of speed as Dr Deborah Ashworth DECC Biodiversity Conservation Section Metro Branch, left, Dr Todd Soderquist, DECC Biodiversity Conservation Unit North West Branch, and project officer, Melinda Norton transfer a captured wallaby to a bag. Photos by Howard Spencer.

# Australian Forests



## Make a fact wheel

You will need:

- 1**
- Scissors
  - Split pin



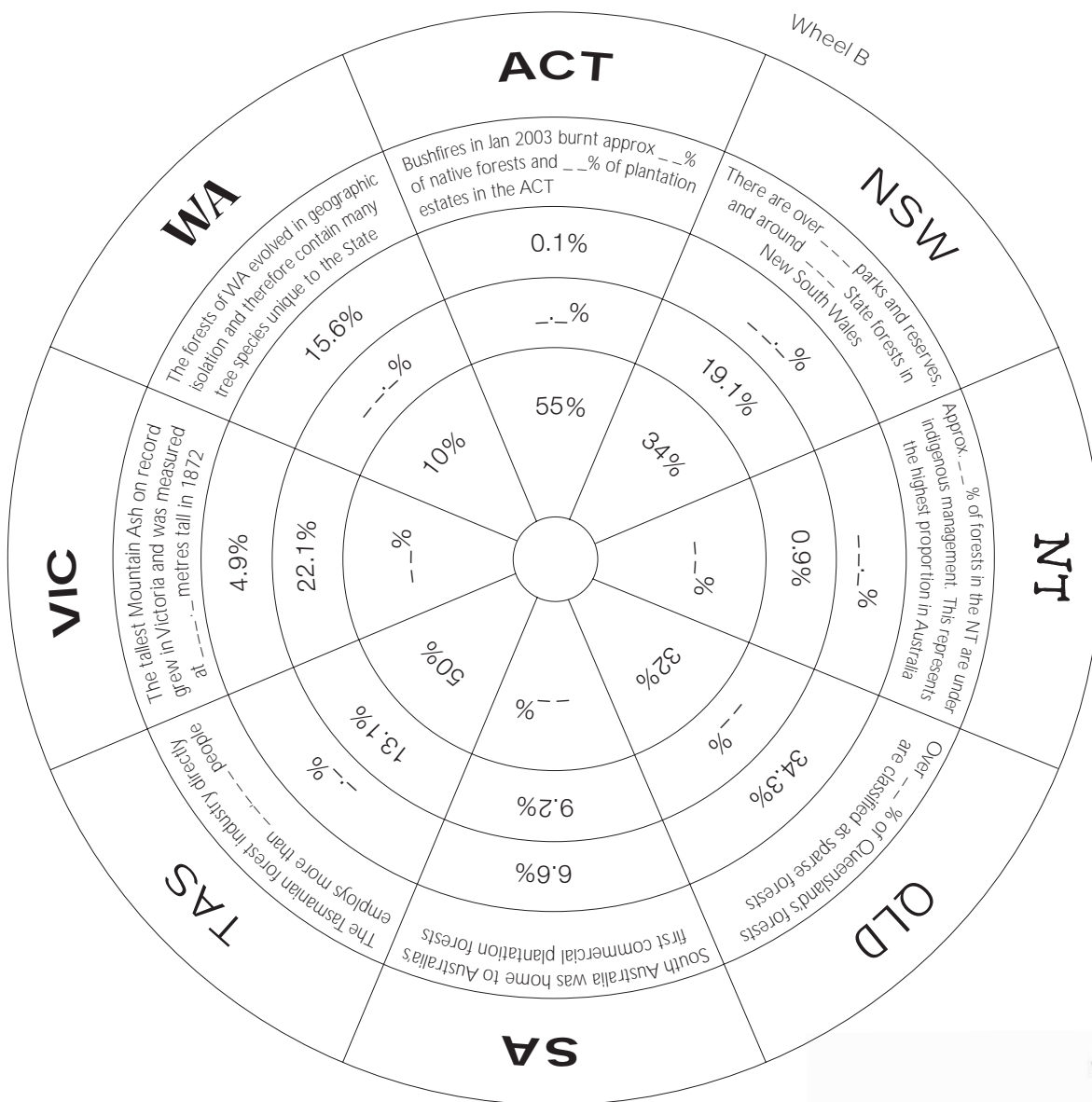
To make your wheel:

- 2**
1. Go to [www.australianforests.org.au](http://www.australianforests.org.au)
  2. Click on the *maps and facts* section on the website.
  3. Fill in the missing facts on Wheel B (facing page).
  4. Cut out both wheels.
  5. Cut out along the dotted line in Wheel A, and discard the wedge shape.
  6. Place Wheel A on top of Wheel B and secure with a split pin.



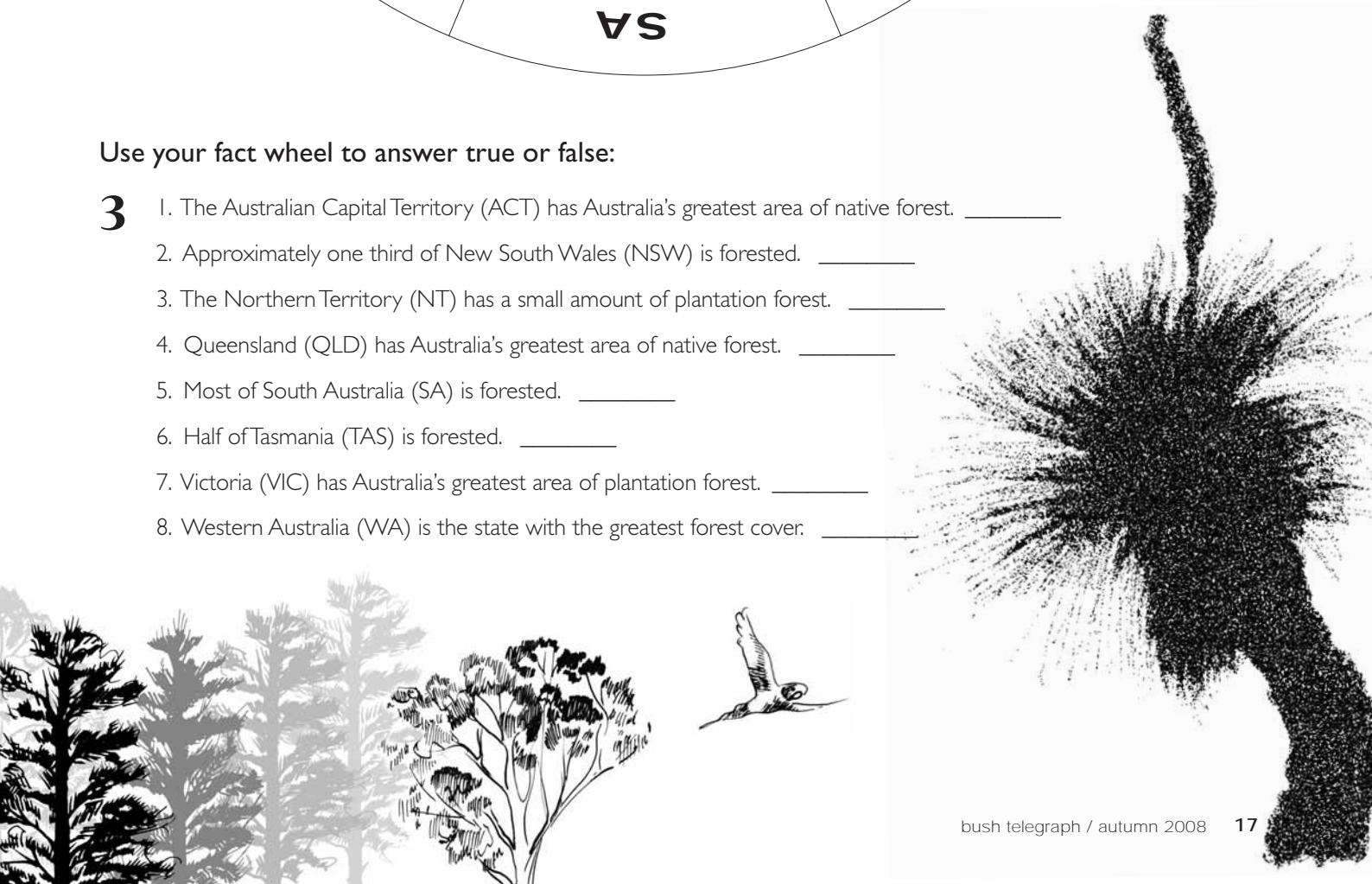


Illustrations by Kathryn Laidlaw/Libero Design



Use your fact wheel to answer true or false:

- 3 1. The Australian Capital Territory (ACT) has Australia's greatest area of native forest. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Approximately one third of New South Wales (NSW) is forested. \_\_\_\_\_
3. The Northern Territory (NT) has a small amount of plantation forest. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Queensland (QLD) has Australia's greatest area of native forest. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Most of South Australia (SA) is forested. \_\_\_\_\_
6. Half of Tasmania (TAS) is forested. \_\_\_\_\_
7. Victoria (VIC) has Australia's greatest area of plantation forest. \_\_\_\_\_
8. Western Australia (WA) is the state with the greatest forest cover. \_\_\_\_\_



# Nature captured by a remarkable photographer



Brian Etheridge was a photographer who had the ability to capture the moment in all his photographs, whether it be of a beautiful forest, a honeyeater hovering over a grevillea flower or a stunning landscape. Many of his photos held personal memories, and there is a story behind every shot. His descriptions were always enchanting and entertaining.

For the last two years, exhibitions of Brian's exquisite photographs have been an annual highlight on the events calendar for November – December at Cumberland State Forest, in West Pennant Hills, Sydney. The Information Centre is a perfect setting for displays such as this, and his images have touched hundreds of visitors to the forest.

Brian was a dedicated member of the Cumberland Bird Observers' Club, which has a long-standing affiliation with Cumberland State Forest. He participated in bird identification and observation activities offered at the forest on Sunday mornings each month, and generously shared his extensive knowledge of local bird species and habitat with bird watchers and nature lovers, young and old.

Brian's photos of birds and landscapes were taken on his journeys throughout Australia, and included images of many large predatory birds as well as less frequently seen species.

Sadly, Brian Etheridge passed away on 14 December last year. His passion for nature, and Cumberland State Forests itself, was felt by staff and visitors alike and he will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

– Mandy Flaxman Community Programs, Sydney

Brian Etheridge (inset) knew how to capture and share the wonders and beauty of our forests and the creatures that inhabit them. *Photo by Mandy Flaxman.* Below: A Gang-gang Cockatoo caught on camera in NSW. *Photo by Brian Etheridge*



## Moving forward in education

Joining forces and resources, educators from NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) met over two days in November 2007 at the inaugural DPI schools' education conference.

The conference attracted an enthusiastic group of staff who took the opportunity to share ideas, identify gaps in resources and build on the success stories of existing education programs.

Forests NSW education officer, Gerard Nolan, took part and provided information on the variety of activities, resources and programs offered by Forests NSW to students and teachers.

"Across DPI there are numerous education programs, both hands-on and classroom resources that can be used to teach students about primary industries in NSW," Gerard said.

Conference participants discussed developing new networks, joint events and adopting LandLearn as the common name for all DPI schools' education offerings.

"Together with curriculum research already carried out by DPI, Forests NSW is now better able to focus the development of its educational resources.

"Forests NSW will be looking to develop the forestry component of the new LandLearn NSW education program and to expand the program to provide workshops and materials for senior students," Gerard said.

LandLearn NSW is an education program, originally created by the Victorian Department of Primary Industries, that encourages teachers and students to reflect on the role primary industries play in everyday life, both now and into the future.

– Kylie Davies Communications, Sydney

Top: Forests NSW education officer, Gerard Nolan showed some of Forests NSW education resources to DPI technical assistant, Joan Gollan. *Photo by Kylie Davies*

# Explore your State forests on a free bus trip

Are you involved in, or do you have an interest in, recreation, landscape management, resource conservation, bush regeneration, forest history or the timber industry? If you do, then take the opportunity to join Forests NSW on a free bus trip to explore our forests.

Normally provided to teachers, Forests NSW is expanding its bus trip program to provide a wider audience with the opportunity to learn more about our wonderful forests, how sustainable management works, benefits our forests provide plus lots more.

The bus trips can provide an insight into our forests. If you are in the building industry you can find out about the qualities and the accreditation of the wood you are using. For wood turners it's a great opportunity to visit where your timber is sourced from. If you are a tourist operator use our bus trip as a way to explore potential sites for your next tour.

The trips will provide the opportunity to meet a range of experts from a diversity of fields who will discuss and demonstrate the day-to-day management of forests. Best of all, you get to visit a number of forest sites that are not always accessible to the general visitor.

If this trip sounds interesting and you would like further details, please contact Gerard Nolan, Forests NSW education officer on 02 9872 0105 or register online at [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/forests/bus-trips](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/forests/bus-trips)

– Gerard Nolan Education officer, Sydney



Not just for teachers, Forests NSW has extended its invitation to those interested in joining a free bus trip and explore the wonders and management of our forests. Photo by Miriam Oetiker

## hot off the press

– our latest publications

### New Ecologically Sustainable Forest Management Plans

Describes how Forests NSW manages State forests today and for generations to come. Five new plans cover native forests of Western and Riverina Regions and planted forests of South West Slopes, Monaro, Central West and Northern Tablelands Regions. See [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/forests](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/forests)



Copies of Forests NSW publications are available from Forests NSW offices across NSW. To locate your nearest office or to order publications call 1300 655 687, fax (02) 9872 6447 or email [cumberland@sf.nsw.gov.au](mailto:cumberland@sf.nsw.gov.au)

## March – May 2008 events

- 20 Mar – 2 Apr **Sydney Royal Easter Show** Don't forget to visit NSW DPI's display in the Dome and discover the science behind our primary industries [www.eastershow.com.au](http://www.eastershow.com.au)
- 17-21 March **World Forestry Day (21 March)** Celebrate at Cumberland State Forest during this week. Join in the events and learn the value of forests and forestry in your everyday Information Centre Ph: (02) 9871 3377 or 1300 655 687
- April – July **Cumberland State Forest activity program** A fabulous range of activities for children and adults Information Centre Ph: (02) 9871 3377 or 1300 655 687
- 3-4 April **Field Bus trip** A free two-day tour near Coffs Harbour. Designed to inform educators and people with a demonstrated interest in forestry about the sustainable management of our forests. For bookings and details call Forests NSW education officer Ph: (02) 9872 0105
- 22 April **Watagans Bus trip** A one-day trip to the forests of the Watagan Mountains, ideal for educators and people with a demonstrated interest in forestry. Learn about the sustainable management of our forests. For bookings and details call Forests NSW education officer Ph: (02) 9872 0105
- 2-4 May **Tocal Field Days** Celebrating 25 years of promoting sustainable agriculture. This event is a great day out for the whole family [www.tocalfielddays.com](http://www.tocalfielddays.com)

# Celebrate World Forestry Day with Forests NSW

Join in activities and events  
at Cumberland State Forest  
during the week 17- 21 March

- Forestry Careers Day
- Free forest walks
- Free school excursions
- Orienteering event

*Hey kids*, enter our exciting colouring-in competition, with age categories and great prizes to be won. Print out the colouring-in pages and entry details from [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/forests/world](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/forests/world)

For further information and bookings contact the Information Centre on Ph: 1300 655 687 or (02) 9871 3377. Contact our Education Officer for information on the Forestry Careers Day and free school excursions on Ph: (02) 9872 0105

