

working in forests today



Research Officer – a scientist involved in experimental investigation, data analysis and reporting of specific research projects (picture shows the use of a vertex to assess tree height)

Research Officer

Georgina Kelly

Bachelor of Science (Hons), Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

People are attracted to becoming Research Officers because of the appeal of utilising applied science that results in positive environmental benefits.

'I want to change the way people view household garbage, garden clippings and even sewage. Rather than being seen as nuisance waste products, I want the community to see it all as a resource with a huge range of potential environmental benefits.

'My role as a Research Officer has focused on boosting plantation growth by adding amendments to the soil. Plantations are grown for timber, biodiversity corridors, carbon credits or even charcoal and power generation.

'Initially, my work focused on placing biosolids (the soil-like organic material resulting from treated wastewater) around pine plantations in the southern highlands of New South Wales. More recently, trials have focused on eucalypt and other native species plantations, particularly on coal mines in the Hunter Valley west of Newcastle.

'I have experimented with many recycled organics such as biosolids, green waste and composted domestic garbage and mulch, through to bottom ash (a by-product of coal-fired electricity generation).

'It really is a fantastic concept – restoring land by establishing plantations, with their growth boosted by what has traditionally been viewed as waste. The social, environmental and economic benefits are obvious. It is a win – win situation for everyone involved and it is important to get this information out to the people who can use it.

'The task of designing and implementing experiments, conducting in-field measurements of a variety of parameters and disseminating reports are all part of my project work. With this particular project we are developing 'recycling on a grand scale'.

Left: Young eucalypt seedlings



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NSW Department of Primary Industries

