

working in forests today



Supervising Forest Officer

Colin Tetley

'Coming from a farming and sawmilling background on the Southern Tablelands of NSW, I joined Forests NSW in 2000 as a fieldworker with Southern Region's silviculture crews. After 2 years, I was successful in gaining a position as a Supervising Forest Officer, commonly known as a SFO'.

'As a SFO, I spend most of my time out in the forest preparing areas for various harvesting operations and supervising those operations once commenced, ensuring environmental standards are met'.

'Some of the jobs include marking boundaries and buffer zones and determining which trees are to be retained and which trees are to be harvested before operations commence. I also assess trees for their suitability for various timber products and check the quality of the trees harvested'.

'When marking a forest area to be harvested, we follow a harvest plan developed by trained foresters and ecologists. The plan identifies key species of flora and fauna, cultural heritage sites and drainage features and the associated special protection measures to be put in place such as buffer zones and the retention of trees for habitat. The plan also specifies management of regeneration within the harvested area'.

'We are also responsible for supervising the harvesting operation itself, ensuring the contractors (tree fellers) cut the most suitable trees for sawmilling while leaving a resource of younger trees for future growth'.

'Another part of the job is assisting with forest fire operations, including on ground management of prescribed fuel reduction burns and wildfires'.

'I enjoy being able to work in the forest amongst the trees and animals and to play a part in growing trees for use in our everyday lives - furniture, houses and paper products to name few'.



Supervising Forest Officer – a fieldworker involved in carrying out the day to day 'hands on' management of forests, including overseeing forest harvesting operations ensuring compliance with codes, licenses and regulatory requirements along with the efficient use of the timber resource



Left: An example of forest harvesting operations in progress



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