

**Think safe, act safe, stay safe**  
*– new safety system launched*

**Retracing Hume & Hovell's footprints**

**Using waste to grow trees**

**Talking to 'The Chief'**  
*– chief timber inspector Charlie Herbert*





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## from the chief executive

'Think safe, act safe, stay safe' – that is the key message for all Forests NSW staff and others working in, or visiting, State forests as they go about their daily tasks. It's a sentiment that can be applied to any activity at any time, from driving to work to operating heavy machinery or lifting a box in the office.

Forests NSW has recently launched a suite of materials as part of a new Safety Management System. This reinvigorated focus on safety has been communicated to all employees in a series of workshops across the state. It recognises that safety is everyone's responsibility and that all employees and contractors have a contribution to make.

We understand that many forestry operations pose inherent risks. To manage these risks we have created a team of specialist safety coordinators covering all areas of the organisation. The safety team reports directly the Chief Executive. This is a fundamental change in our approach to safety management.

This is a contemporary model and we are happy to share it with other employers in the industry. We have already received enquiries from other forestry jurisdictions about that. You can read about the program on page 12 of this edition.

And on page 8, you can read about *Sharing the Road with Trucks* – an award-winning project developed by the local councils and the forest industry on the south west slopes to improve safety on the roads in and around our forests.

Safety is more important than cost or convenience. I look forward to working with our staff, contractors and customers to achieve the highest possible safety standards for our industry.



*P. Duncan*  
Peter Duncan  
Chief Executive



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**Cover photograph** A new safety management system has been introduced by Forests NSW, aimed at ensuring a first-class safety performance for the organisation. See page 9 for story. *Photo by David Barnes/Forests NSW Image Library*



Director-General of the NSW Department of Primary Industries, Barry Buffier, at the site of the new Forest Technology Centre in northern NSW. Photo by Howard Spencer

## Forest Technology Centre open for business

Timber companies, research organisations and plantation investors are being encouraged to get involved in the new Forest Technology Centre near Grafton in northern New South Wales.

Minister for Natural Resources, Primary Industries and Mineral Resources, Ian Macdonald, said he hoped the centre would become a world leader in using science and technology to improve growth, quality and pest resistance in hardwood plantations.

"Forests NSW recently completed a detailed financial feasibility study that indicates the Forest Technology Centre will be a robust business and deliver solid returns for the industry and the communities that rely on a viable timber sector," Mr Macdonald said.

"The centre will focus on tree improvement, propagation, plantation management and new technologies – all designed to deliver high-value timber products.

"Ultimately, we want to help ensure the State's forest industries are internationally competitive and have ready access to cutting edge developments.

"To make sure work carried out at the centre is relevant, we want industry to get involved by working with Forests NSW and investing in a range of projects that will help the industry grow, both on the north coast and other parts of regional NSW."

The Forest Technology Centre is being developed as part of the NSW Department of Primary Industries Grafton Centre of Excellence, 15 kilometres north-west of Grafton.

It was opened by the Director-General of the Department of Primary Industries, Barry Buffier, on 4 August.

Nearly 500 hectares of the 800-hectare site have already been earmarked as trial plots and plantations so that leading scientists can pursue research on a range of species.

## Concerned consumers can offset their own emissions

People who feel a twinge of self-reproach about the carbon dioxide they have inadvertently emitted by driving the car, taking a long plane flight or turning on air-conditioning can now offset their guilt.

They can buy carbon credits, a new way for people who care about the environment to express their concern.

Forests NSW, the first to trade in NSW Greenhouse Abatement Certificates (or NGACs) arising from carbon sequestration from forests, has finished its first year of carbon credit sales with its books cleared and interest coming in from both mandatory and voluntary sectors.

The first NGACs were sold to a predictable market: the benchmark customers such as electricity retailers who have to reduce carbon dioxide emissions through purchasing carbon credits.

"The NSW scheme is mandatory for electricity retailers, but there is increasing interest to obtain NGACs to offset emissions voluntarily," Forests NSW carbon investment analyst, Penny Baalman, said.

"Companies are now emerging that can retail offsets to the public. Businesses are also coming forward interested in offsetting their organisation's emissions.

"Our second sale was to a web-based company, Carbon Planet, which offers the service of retailing carbon credits to environmentally-concerned members of the public," she said.

"These can be used to offset a family's annual emissions.

"These companies are particularly interested in acquiring reliable credits from properly authorised and independently audited projects, which the creation of NGACs provides."

Penny said that the NSW scheme had made amendments to legislation and the registry to allow this voluntary surrender of credits to occur.

"It's encouraging to know that in the absence of Australia's participation in the Kyoto Protocol, State governments, businesses and the public are interested in doing the right thing for future generations of Australians."

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

Environmentally-concerned consumers can now offset their own greenhouse gas emissions through the purchase of carbon credits from forest sinks in NSW. Photo David Barnes/ Forests NSW Image Library



## Forester lends a hand in tsunami area

When the devastating tsunami hit parts of Asia in December 2004, many people wondered what they could personally do to help.

While many chose to donate money, Forests NSW forester, Stephen Griffiths, joined a team of volunteer builders from Sydney to give a helping hand to people in the Khao Lak Region of Thailand.

With discussions starting in early January, the group of twelve volunteers estimated that more than \$25,000 would be required for flights, accommodation and food and began to raise the money.

"While the team collected information about what to expect and how to prepare for the journey, no words could describe the effect on us personally of what we saw as a result of the tsunami," Stephen said.

The team hoped to complete a simple brick house during a two-week stay in March. Unfortunately, due to building plans, temperature and humidity differences, the quality and quantity of tools and the late delivery of materials, this was not able to be achieved.

Departing Thailand with two uncompleted buildings, the builders were thrilled to hear the first house was completed by other volunteers six weeks later.

"The trip would not have been possible without community support, with Manly Council, Habitat for Humanity and Forests NSW all making contributions," Stephen said.

The group of builders is now called 'Building Across Boundaries', with plans to travel to another country to offer assistance later this year.

For more information contact Stephen Griffiths on Mob: 0403 970 344. Donations can be made to the Manly Warringah Credit Union on 1300 131 964, indicating the 'Tsunami Builders Fund'.

– **Leah Flint** Communications, Maitland

(left to right) Jason Burns and the new home owner Mrs Wasunon (Tim) Jannakan and forester Stephen Griffiths constructing a house in the tsunami-devastated Khao Lak Region of Thailand.  
*Photo by Brett Gittoes*



## Young violin master wins new instrument

He might be only 16-years-old, but Ray Chen has proven he has a masterful talent for music.

Ray has won the 2005 Kendall National Violin Competition, sponsored by Forests NSW.

Eight competitors faced the judges at the semi-finals at Government House in Sydney in April, with four selected for the finals held in Kendall, on the mid-north coast, in May.

"Ray also won the audience prize," said Forests NSW Mid North Coast acting regional manager, Kathy Jones.

"He began his violin studies at the age of four, and winning both the judges' acclaim and the audience approval shows he has developed his talent well."

Janet Anderson won best performer of an Australian composition.

Ray received a violin made from Australian timbers made by master luthier, Graham Caldersmith, who lives and works in Kendall.

"Graham has a background in physics and acoustics, and he has brought this knowledge to drafting fine wood instruments from Australian timbers," Kathy said.

"This year Graham presented violin number 100 produced from his workshop as the grand prize in the competition."

Australian Solar Timbers is also an important sponsor of the competition.

The Kendall community has strong ties to forests and the timber industry.

"The forests of the area have been harvested for timber for more than 130 years and are among the fastest growing blackbutt forests in NSW," Kathy said.

"The forestry profession these days is very much about working with and supporting local communities, while providing ecologically sustainable management of State forests."

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

Top: Winner of the 2005 Kendall National Violin Competition Ray Chen with master luthier, Graham Caldersmith, and his violin number 100, this year's prize. *Photo by Lyndall Cooté*



Masters students from Macquarie University set up a harp trap for bats as part of recent field studies under the guidance of Forests NSW. Photo by Adam Fawcett

## Barking owl flies in for students

Forests NSW Hunter region ecologist, Adam Fawcett, surprised himself and a team of university students recently when he called up a barking owl in Putty State Forest.

The elusive barking owls, so named because their peculiar call resembles a small dog's bark, are more often recorded further west than this forest snuggled into the eastern flank of Wollemi National Park due west of Newcastle.

"We heard a faint call late in the afternoon and thought it might be a barking owl," said Adam. "We decided to broadcast pre-recorded calls later in the evening and an owl came right in, sat on a branch and looked at us.

"The students were thrilled to see the owl in its natural habitat as it sat for a number of minutes."

Adam was assisting Forests NSW wildlife manager, Dr Jim Shields, in presenting to students undertaking

a masters in wildlife management from Macquarie University, Sydney.

Forests NSW is one of a number of industry partners involved in the creation of the masters program at the university.

"The field trip aimed to give students hands-on experience with techniques they have been studying, and skills in animal handling. We laid 100 Elliott traps, 20 pitfall traps, and two harp traps for bats," Adam said.

"The students also conducted spotlighting for arboreal mammals and diurnal bird surveys, frog searches, and vegetation and habitat assessments."

In addition to the owl, the students found greater gliders, brush-tailed possums, yellow bellied gliders and Goulds long-eared bat. Mist netting for diurnal birds also located brown thornbills and a white throated tree creeper.

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

## New conservation areas declared in central west

Forests NSW has entered new territory with the declaration of Community Conservation Areas as part of the NSW Government's Western Regional Assessment decision.

The decision announced in May covers the Brigalow Belt South and Nandewar bio-regions.

These regions cover nearly ten per cent of the state, stretching from Dubbo to the Queensland border. They include the well known Pilliga, Goonoo, Terry Hie Hie and Bebo forests.

Community Conservation Areas (CCAs) will be a new tenure of public land that aims to achieve permanent conservation outcomes and provide certainty to the various industries operating in the region.

The CCAs will have defined zones, including:

- permanent conservation zones;
- permanent timber production zones;

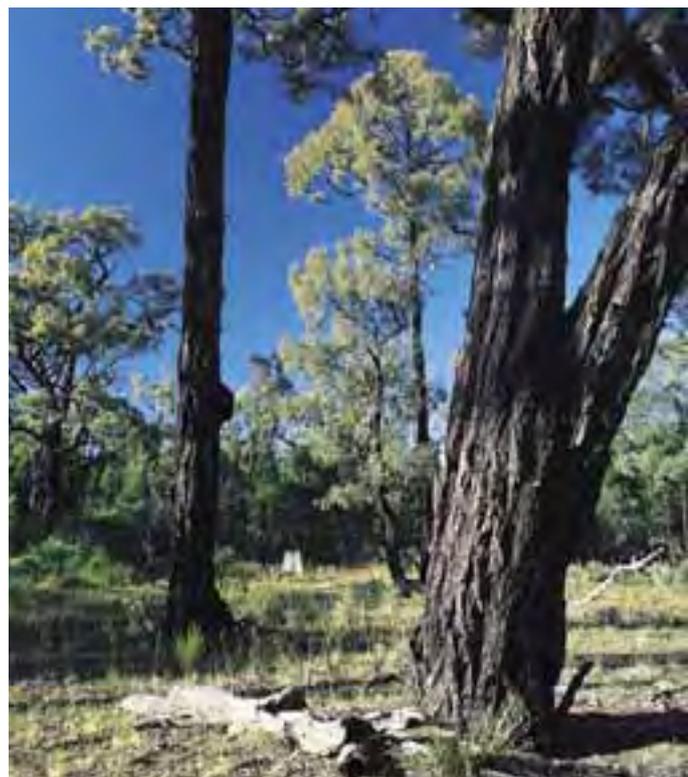
- zones that are for both conservation and other industries, such as gas and mining; and
- zones that are for both timber and other industries, such as gas and mining.

The CCAs will be managed by Forests NSW and the Department of Environment and Conservation.

"Forests NSW has been working closely with the timber industry since the decision was announced to plan for the future of white cypress sawmilling in the area," said Forests NSW western regional manager, Paul Wells.

"This new class of conservation reserve will also receive management advice from a committee of 13 local community and industry representatives."

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



Community Conservation Areas (CCAs) will be a new tenure of public land that aims to achieve permanent conservation outcomes in the central west of NSW. Photo Forests NSW Image Library

# Llamas join alpacas in fight against dogs

Llamas have been added to the fight against wild dogs following the success of alpacas as guard animals.

Since mid 2003, alpacas have been successfully trialled as guard animals for sheep and now the Tumbarumba Shire Feral Animal Working Group has purchased six llamas to help protect stock from wild animal attacks.

The group, which includes Forests NSW, Tumbarumba Shire Council, local landholders, National Parks and Wildlife Service and Hume Rural Lands Protection Board, felt llamas, which are bigger and possibly more aggressive than alpacas, could make a difference when it comes to protecting sheep from wild dogs and foxes.

Llamas bond with lambing ewes and discourage predators by aggressively confronting them. They have been known to kill foxes by pummeling them with their front legs.

Forests NSW manager at Tumbarumba, Chris Rhynehart, said that guard animals are part of an integrated control program.

"There will be no reduction in baiting and trapping. Guard animals help to protect the flock, while traps and baits work to control them in neighbouring forests," he said.

The llamas have been lent to farmers in the Khancoban, Tooma and Burra Valleys. The most recent arrival is being trialled on a property owned by Rex Bergin.

Rex recently lost five ewes to wild dogs but said during the past few years the number of attacks had dropped.

"We have all got to work together to stop the wild dogs. Forests NSW does a great job of baiting and trapping them in the forests and has helped us protect our lambing ewes from attack," he said.

His llama will be used to help protect 200 lambing ewes. "We have got to try every avenue – there is no use in throwing your arms in the air and giving up," Rex said.

– Sarah Chester Public Affairs and Media, Albury



Landholder Rex Bergin with his llama. It's hoped the llama will protect sheep from wild dogs and foxes. Photos by Sarah Chester

A record ten million seedlings and cuttings will be taken from Forests NSW Blowering Nursery this year. Ninety per cent will be planted in state-owned plantations. Photo by David Booby

## Ten million pines grown at nursery

A record of more than ten million pine seedlings and cuttings will be lifted this year from Forests NSW Blowering Nursery.

Nursery manager, Dean Page, said the lift started in May and was due to finish in September.

"We have the numbers and the pines are fantastic this year," he said. "With the bigger crop comes more jobs for people working in the nursery. This year, in excess of 50 casual staff will be employed in addition to the nursery's permanent workforce.

"Plus, there is the flow-on effect for the region as people are needed to prepare and plant this record crop.

"Ninety per cent of the crop is sent out across New South Wales to be planted in state-owned plantations, while the other ten per cent goes to external customers.

"It's a high-tech nursery with improved genetic stock and the demand for our seedlings and cuttings just keeps on growing," Dean said.

The nursery, one of the largest *Pinus radiata* producers in Australia, will produce about 8.8 million pine seedlings and 1.2 million pine cuttings this year.

Dean said maintaining the quality of the stock was crucial, and that seedlings and cuttings must be kept moist and cool when they were transported out by truck in containers for planting.

"It is essential to have the best material available as these seedlings and cuttings will become high-value logs further down the track," he said.

– Sarah Chester Public Affairs & Media, Albury



## First ever joint venture harvested

In 1992 Jeff and Lesley Knight entered into the first ever joint venture plantation with Forests NSW, establishing 5.2 hectares of shining gum (*Eucalyptus nitens*) and maiden's gum (*Eucalyptus maidenii*).

The plantation was established on 'Parkview' on the outskirts of Towamba in south eastern New South Wales. The Knights established the property as a demonstration farm forestry site featuring a range of tree plantings for a variety of farm and commercial purposes.

Forests NSW Eden-based resource protection manager, Dean Payne, said the plantation had recently been commercially harvested at age 13.

"The Knights used this opportunity to host a field day to assist other local forest growers," he said. "Jeff is quite happy with the plantation clearfall yield of 125 tonnes a hectare, considering the number of drought-affected years during that period."

With assistance from South East NSW Private Forestry, the Knights have also established a variety of research trials to gauge the effects of different site preparation techniques, as well as trials involving species/provenance, weed control and fertilizers.

'Parkview' has been host to a number of farm forestry field days. There is also a collection of historic farm and forestry items, a small shop and a nine-hole golf course affectionately dubbed 'Royal Towamba'.

"As keen flora and fauna observers, Jeff and Lesley have noticed how the variety of trees have attracted a diversity of new bird species, including large numbers of vulnerable swift parrots that migrate through the local area around Easter," Dean said.

"Jeff plans to utilise the cleared plantation site to review the benefits of managed coppice stems for the next rotation to demonstrate the effects of an established root system on site productivity."

– **Sarah Chester** Public Affairs & Media, Albury

Harvesting of the 13-year-old plantation at 'Parkview' in south eastern NSW. *Photo by Dean Payne*



## Native timbers put on show

A new competition for woodworkers was staged as part of the 2005 Timber and Working with Wood Show held in Sydney in June.

Forests NSW sponsored the 'Putting Timbers on Show' competition that gave woodworking students and enthusiasts the opportunity to gain public recognition for their gifted woodworking talents.

"It was the biggest and best show so far and the competition entries provided a great centre piece," wood show event coordinator, Lucy Foord, said.

Eighty woodworkers entered the twelve competition categories that included sculpture, woodturning and toy and instrument making.

Kim Larymore of the NSW Woodworkers Association said that it was great to see so many of the entries created from Australian timbers, as more and more woodworkers discover the great qualities and superb grains of native timbers.

Members of the Woodworkers Association took out five prizes including all three prizes in the furniture-making section. John Bassell's blanket box won first prize, with tables made by David Eden and Paul Baxton taking second and third.

Forests NSW display at the show allowed visitors to contemplate some of the often less thought-about benefits of State forests, including carbon sequestration and salinity amelioration, in addition to hints on how to identify wood types.

Many woodworkers had never seen wood under a microscope and were interested to learn the difference between hardwoods and softwoods.

Forest NSW staff enjoyed talking to visitors and knowledge was flowing in both directions between staff and show goers.

– **Susie Kable** Communications, Sydney

Top: Forests NSW sponsored a successful woodworking competition as part of the 2005 Timber and Working with Wood Show in Sydney. *Photo by Kylie Davies*





A grey headed flying fox. More than 220,000 were recently counted in South Brooman State Forest on the NSW south coast. Photo copyright Esther Beaton

## 220,000 flying foxes in south coast forest

A massive 220,000 grey headed flying foxes (*Pteropus poliocephalus*) were recorded in South Brooman State Forest on the south coast during the 2005 national flying fox census.

Forests NSW acting ecologist based at Batemans Bay, Kelly Rowley, said an annual census was conducted by volunteers to track the flying fox population in Australia.

Individual animals are counted at dusk as they fly overhead from their camp to foraging areas.

Kelly said State forests along the south coast housed two known camps of grey headed flying foxes.

"Population numbers at these camps have been monitored over the past decade. The most active is in South Brooman State Forest.

"The 2001 census found close to 83,000 flying foxes here, while the count in May 2005 reached a record 220,000 animals – the largest camp site counted across the eastern seaboard of Australia.

"We believe this year's large gathering is associated with the one-in-seven year prolific flowering event of spotted gums," Kelly said.

"Camps are commonly formed in gullies, typically near water and within 20 to 25 kilometres of food resources. During the day, individuals rest within the camp, dispersing at dusk to forage on flowering and fruiting plants, before returning to the camp before dawn.

"It's always great to see the flying foxes return to the camps, especially in such massive numbers.

"It's an enormous boost of confidence knowing that our protection measures put in place during the 2002/03 harvest adjacent to the Brooman camp have been successful, and a positive indication that our threatened species management strategies are proving effective.

"I would like to thank Vanessa Place and Patrina Birch for helping organise the count and all our volunteers who assisted with this record tally," Kelly said.

– Sarah Chester Public Affairs & Media, Albury

## Industry council's focus on safety wins award

The Forest Industry Council (FIC) in the south west slopes of New South Wales is proving to be an invaluable forum for an industry generating \$1.166 billion for the regional economy and providing jobs for more than 3,500 people.

In October last year, Tumut, Tumbarumba and Gundagai Councils, in consultation

with FIC, launched a road safety campaign called 'Sharing the road with trucks'.

In late May, the campaign won the 2005 Local Government Excellence in Road Safety Award presented by the Institute for Public Works Engineering Australia (NSW).

The campaign, organised by Trudy Stewart, involved four months of print and radio

advertisements, distribution of 6000 brochures, and extensive coverage in FIC's 'Safety First' newsletter.

A reporting line was also established to record information from road users on unsafe behaviour and road hazards.

TAFE NSW Riverina Institute, Tumut campus, joined forces with FIC to address the industry's legislative requirements to promote high work standards and safe practices through accredited training programs.

This innovative partnership was formalised in 1996 through the establishment of the Forest Industry Training Centre.

Head of TAFE's Tumut campus and FIC executive officer, Mark Grove, said one of FIC's major achievements during the past year was its Safety Solutions Group initiatives, which focused the industry on achieving practical improvements to road safety and operations in the bush.

FIC was established in 1981 by Forests NSW and the regional forest industry for growers, processors, haulers and harvesters to discuss matters of common interest.

– Sarah Chester Public Affairs & Media, Albury



Greenfreight's Peter Hammond and Anthony Foster being interviewed by Peter Allibon for the making of 'Sharing the road with trucks' advertisements. Photo by Gavin Jeffries

# Think safe, act safe, stay safe

Improving the safety of all those who head to work in NSW State forests is a top priority for Forests NSW. Recently, the organisation rolled out a major revision to its safety management system to close to 1,000 employees, all aimed at ensuring a first-class safety performance. Howard Spencer reports.

'Think Safe, Act Safe, Stay Safe' is a new mantra for all Forests NSW staff, reinforced in a swathe of new safety materials recently distributed across New South Wales.

"We believe workplace injuries can be largely eliminated if employees think 'safety first'," said Forests NSW acting manager of health and safety, Chris Nieass. "This means that staff need to be vigilant on the job and share the responsibility for safety.

"The basis of our new strategy is for employees to really recognise that safety begins with them."

Chris said that one of the most compelling reasons for any organisation implementing an occupational health and safety management system is to ensure that each and every employee goes home fit and well.

"Timber harvesting operations are inherently dangerous, and Forests NSW wants to ensure that employees and contractors understand how to work safely," Chris said.

"Assessing the risks in the workplace is a vital role for everyone in Forests NSW. If we apply the risk assessment process to each element of our operations, we are a long way down the track towards understanding the things that can harm us – and then we can take action to remove or minimise that risk," he said.

Forests NSW safety and training coordinators presented the new system to staff around the state in mid-2005, training them in conducting risk assessments to gain an understanding of what is required in the field, or in the office, to identify and manage some of the common hazards in their workplace.

"We treat an injury from poor ergonomic practices in the office just as seriously as an injury in the bush," Chris said. "Each can have ongoing serious consequences for the employee and their families.

"We want to train our people to do the best they can to avoid them."

Chris said many of the current practices have been retained, new practices added, and some altered to ensure that a safe workplace was provided.

Forests NSW system comprises two main documents. The safety management system manual, known as the 'Green Book', establishes some of the ground rules and priorities for managing safety.

The second, or 'Red Book', is a collection of safety standards that defines the things staff are to do to attend to safety.

"The two books, plus other material such as guidelines and checklists, are available to every employee on the organisation's intranet," Chris said.

He said that while the new safety management system largely focused on employee safety, Forests NSW already had a contractor safety pack as a guide for contractors to put in place their own safety management system.

"We expect everyone to be able to recognise a hazard when they see one and to eliminate it or control it effectively," Chris said. "We will be focusing our efforts on ensuring a high level of safety performance from all of our employees, from the chief executive through to foresters and field staff."

– Howard Spencer  
Public Affairs & Media, Coffs Harbour



# CHARLIE HERBERT —

The phone is running hot on the desk of 'The Chief'. Surrounded by files, timber samples and inspection books, Charlie Herbert answers a question about an infestation of longicorn beetles in some tallowwood decking. It's a fairly standard day for Charlie, New South Wales' chief timber inspector.

Heading up Forests NSW timber inspection unit, Charlie leads a team of eight staff that carry out inspections of the appearance, quality and suitability of native and imported timbers, and check for timber pests and termites, for a variety of clients across the state. This is in addition to regulating the sale of treated timbers and other functions under the NSW Timber Marketing Act.

After 40 years in the job, Charlie is just as enthusiastic about his work today as he was as a young man.

Signing up with the then Forestry Commission of NSW in 1965 as a cadet timber inspector, Charlie knew he wanted to work in the bush, and also that he wanted to work for the Forestry Commission.

"So for me it was a choice of becoming a timber inspector or a forester," Charlie said.

The life of a cadet was one of almost constant change.

"Initially, we spent time with the researchers, learning about various aspects of their work," he said.

This ranged from strength testing of various timbers through to identifying insect pests and their telltale signs.

"Then we got sent off to the bush to work with logging foreman at operations in all types of State forest across the state. We might spend three weeks in a town or in a forestry camp, looking at trees and the logs as they were cut," Charlie said. "We measured logs, assessed defects and looked at finished products in the sawmill yards."

All this gave Charlie and other cadets invaluable experience in the identification

of timbers, from the standing tree to cut log to sawn timber.

Four years after commencing his cadetship, Charlie became a qualified inspector and started working around Eden, then moved to Sydney, Wollongong and returning to Sydney.

In 1981, Charlie was appointed chief timber inspector and has been based in Sydney ever since.

About a third of the timber inspection unit's time is spent dealing with enquiries from the public about timber, termites and other pests.

"A lot of the questions we receive relate to consumers purchasing timber that hasn't performed the way they thought it would," Charlie said.

"Often this might be because the buyer has unrealistic expectations of what the product would look like, for example, expecting new floorboards laid in a renovation to be perfect but still match the 100-year-old boards uncovered when the carpet was lifted."

Charlie cites the Timber Marketing Act as an example of some of the earliest consumer protection laws in Australia.

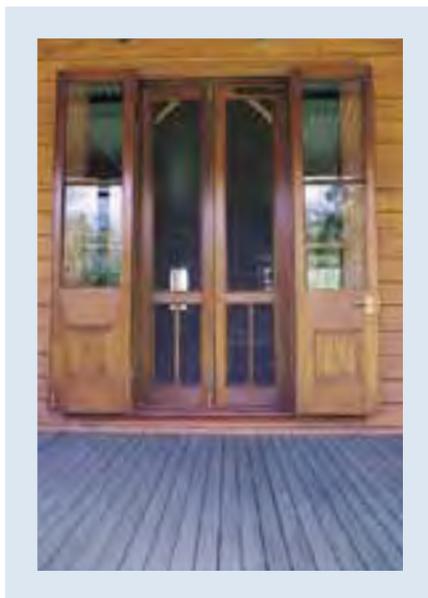
"The Act ensures that buyers are getting what they pay for. It's about ensuring the grade and strength, preservative treatment, appearance and lyctid susceptibility are all appropriate for the end use."

Termites occupy a large part of the unit's time, with a number of the inspectors licensed pest controllers.

When asked if there are more termites around today than in the past, Charlie says no.

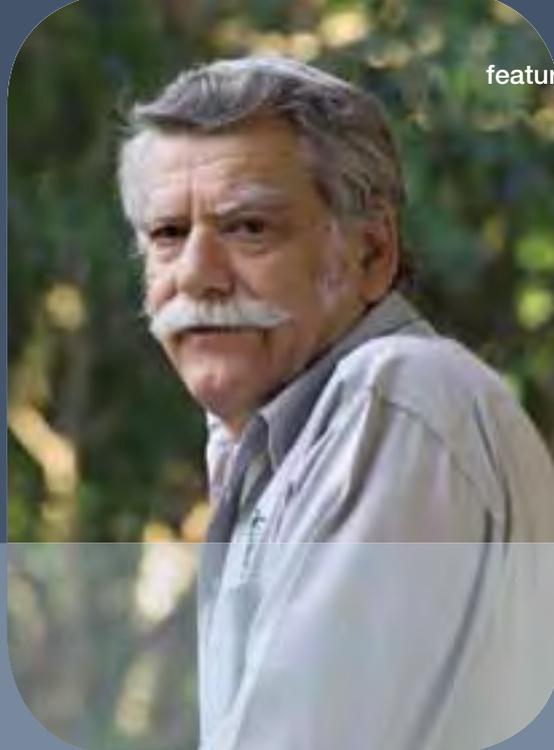
"There aren't more, it's just that people are more aware of them. Today's houses are built with excellent protection measures, but this wasn't always the case in the past.

"The best advice is to have yearly pest inspections. And if you do find termites, do not disturb them without consulting a licensed pest controller."



Top right: Charlie Herbert has been inspecting timber for forty years. *Photo by David Barnes*

From timber bridges to family homes, Forests NSW timber inspectors are trained to assess the suitability of timbers. *Photos Forests NSW Image Library*



# 'THE CHIEF'

Charlie's advice to those consumers that are building or renovating is to do some research.

"Talk to the timber suppliers, use the internet, read books and talk to industry associations," Charlie said. "Become as informed as possible about the product you are buying and its suitable uses."

On his desk, Charlie has a sample of some untreated native hardwood decking that has weathered and changed colour.

"Had the buyer sought advice about how to maintain the timber, then the silver grey colour could have been avoided," he said.

Charlie says he gets a lot of satisfaction from his work, particularly with long-term projects coming to fruition.

"Fifteen years ago, we started to look at the appropriate use of timber sleepers. The Australian Standard was changed, the industry got involved and then the Standard was changed again.

"Ultimately, this led to an improvement in potential for timber sleepers. For red gum sleepers in particular, the price became a better reflection of the true value of the product."

He has a role in a number of industry and Standards Australia committees, and is a well-known face at seminars as he campaigns to educate the industry and consumers on the latest legislation and developments relating to timber products.

Charlie says that no two days are ever the same, and he has recently become a minor media celebrity with his role on 'The Weekend Woodies'.

The state-wide ABC radio program is on Saturday mornings and is promoted as a lifeline to those battling with roofing tiles, cracking walls, shrinking floorboards and myriad other household building challenges.

"It's a bit of fun," Charlie says. "We have a loyal listening audience and I enjoy the challenges of talkback radio."

Will the attractions of media fame and retirement lure Charlie away?

"I haven't really considered a retirement date yet," he says. "There is no caravan picked out!"

Asked about the highlights of his lengthy career, Charlie thinks hard for a moment.

"I guess it would be having the opportunity to help in advancing the proper uses of timbers in the marketplace," he said.

– Leah Flint Communications, Maitland

## TIMBER AND PEST INSPECTION SERVICE

Consumers wanting an independent, expert opinion can join the growing list of Forests NSW clients. From schools, wharves, historic buildings, bridges and the suburban home, Forests NSW timber inspectors cover it all.

Timber is not a mass-produced product with each piece being exactly the same as the rest. It is a natural product, with characteristics which can vary widely from species to species, and from piece to piece.

Nothing can beat the performance of timber in a wide range of applications, provided the correct species and grade are used.

When timber does not meet expectations, it is usually because either the wrong specifications are being used or the timber is not as specified.

For the prospective house owner, an inspection can be done of the frame and roof trusses as the house is being built. This ensures problems do not occur down the track because the timber did not comply with the specification – a comforting insurance for the biggest expenditure a family may make.

When home owners, builders, architects or timber suppliers find a problem with the performance of timber, an inspection can usually pinpoint the cause and often suggest a solution.

Additionally, inspectors can assess the presence of termites and offer an unbiased opinion as to the best treatment.

The inspection service is used routinely by local state and overseas government departments as well as by members of the public and organisations such as *Choice* magazine.

Although the inspections are on a fee-for-service basis, rates are reasonable and inspections can be made at relatively short notice.

Contact Forests NSW timber inspectors on Ph: (02) 9872 0179 or check out [www.forest.nsw.gov.au/business/timber\\_inspection](http://www.forest.nsw.gov.au/business/timber_inspection)



# Wastes + mine + trees = plantation



## GEORGINA KELLY HAS A MISSION.

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

For the past 15 years, Georgina, a research officer with Forests NSW, has been focused on boosting plantation growth by adding amendments to the soil. Initially, her 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.

In the Hunter, Georgina has experimented with biosolids, green waste and bottom ash (a by-product of coal-fired electricity generation), through to composted domestic garbage and mulch.

"Working with a number of partners in the mining industry and government, we have established eight plantation trials on a variety of sites in the upper Hunter Valley," Georgina said. "Sites have ranged from river flat buffer land to reclaimed overburden from open-cut

coalmining, all in an area with rainfall of less than 650 millimetres per year, poor soils and winter frosts."

Georgina is very excited about her most recent trial, established a year ago on Xstrata's Narama

Mine, midway between Singleton and Muswellbrook.

The five hectare site has been planted with spotted gum (*Corymbia maculata*) and a river red gum/flooded gum hybrid (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis\*grandis*), with eight treatments employed – biosolids; mulch; soil conditioner; municipal waste compost; inorganic fertiliser; biosolids plus mulch; fertiliser plus mulch; and an untreated, or control, site.

"So far, the areas treated with biosolids and the biosolid/mulch combination exhibit the best growth in both height and diameter," Georgina said. "The benefits of mulch in moderating soil temperature and maintaining soil moisture will be no surprise to most gardeners."

The trial, funded by the Department of Environment and Conservation, will continue for another two years.

Georgina is confident that the results will add further weight to the concept of eucalypt plantations supporting a future timber industry in the upper Hunter.

"The community, particularly local government, are very supportive of the plantation trials and are keen to explore opportunities for viable industries to complement the existing mining industry," Georgina explained.

"Our research demonstrates that we can 'boutique mix' combinations of treatments according to each site to maximize tree growth and also ensure that plantation est-

ablishment and management costs are on par with other traditional forms of mine site rehabilitation.

"Plantations can be grown for timber, to create biodiversity corridors, for carbon credits or even charcoal and power generation," she said.

"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."

Supporters of the concept are now focusing their efforts on how best to attract the

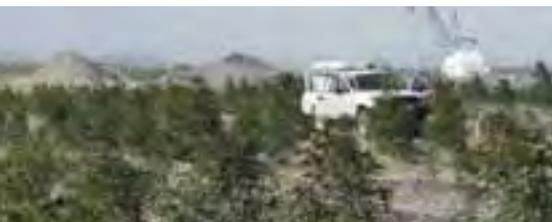


private investment needed to establish large scale plantations in the area, utilising the

knowledge that Forests NSW researchers have gathered over the past six years.

"Forests NSW is keen to see more plantations established in the upper Hunter and we hope to work with mine owners and operators to see this outcome realised," Georgina said.

– Leah Flint Communications, Maitland



A new plantation trial is underway at Xstrata's Narama Mine, midway between Singleton and Muswellbrook; A variety of amendments to the soil are being assessed to determine what gives best growth results; Georgina Kelly hopes that waste will one day be viewed as a valuable resource by the community. Photos courtesy Georgina Kelly

Often in the past when a home owner asked for wooden floors, they weren't too fussy. They got whatever timber the builder had in stock or was available from the local timber store.

Today, though, it's a different story with new interest in using timber as a feature of the home and consumers becoming more knowledgeable about the variety of timbers available.

Prominent Australian building industry supplier, Boral Timber, has risen to the challenge of the modern market with a new emphasis on the highland timber species grown in State forests around Walcha in the New England area of New South Wales.

Long-time Walcha miller and now site manager for Boral, Greg Carter, is quietly proud of the species his mill has been producing for today's discerning new homemakers.

"Each of these species has different characteristics and durability," Greg says.

It is quite a list, but most can be seen in half-metre square samples in Boral showrooms.

The range of species includes highland stringybark, diehard stringybark, silvertop stringybark, New England messmate, New England blackbutt, brown barrel, Sydney blue gum and ribbon gum.

"This gives a great contrast of colours," says Greg. "Blue gum is very red, for instance, and ribbon gum is a lighter colour. Messmate is full of tans and creams."

The timbers are drawn from a number of surrounding forests, including Riamukka, Tuggolo, Nowendoc, Nundle, Styx and Enfield State Forests.

The rough sawn timber is sent on from Walcha to Boral's Gloucester site, where manager Chris Johnson finishes the product for market.

The timber is racked and air dried for at least four months, before it is finished in a kiln for up to a week or more.

"We kiln-dry our product to ensure a thoroughly stable, quality end-product ideally suited to the climatic conditions of our market place," says Chris.

"All Boral flooring is dried to a narrow range of 9 to 11 per cent moisture content for the Australian market and to an agreed range as required for any export markets."

The timbers are produced to a number of grades, which include the high-end 'classic', with the most even character but fewer natural features.

Next is 'Australiana', which displays some colour and grain variations, and then 'natural', which has a range of different characteristics in each individual board.

"I personally like the different grain and colour variations in the natural range, but it is a matter of personal taste in the colour and appearance you are looking for," Chris said.

The timber is graded off the saw, and finished to a standard 80mm tongue-and-groove flooring board with end matching.

Supplies of the highland species are being accumulated in anticipation of a major market expansion and demand for this material.

Boral is currently spending significant sums of money marketing the special features of the highland flooring range.

This includes full-page advertising that is currently being run in the major weekend newspapers as well as a range of home and lifestyle magazines and professional journals that are targeted to architects.

Boral is convinced the highland species will be the next big wave in the fashion flooring stakes.

Besides standard flooring, Boral produces 'Slimwood', a strip flooring, 12mm thick, which can be glued to most existing hard surfaces.

"This opens up the renovation and 'do it yourself' market to a good looking timber floor product," says Chris.

"The 'Slimwood' packs can be carried up high rise buildings easily, and lend themselves to people who are restoring older houses or renovating."

"This is thinner than traditional tongue-and-groove strip floors.

"Because it goes down directly over a structural surface such as concrete or plywood it is well supported and you don't need the extra 7 mm thickness."

'Slimwood' still offers the same depth of wear.

"This is designed to be glued down, and it only takes a short time to install, sand and finish," Chris said.

The highland timbers are also available as species specific parquetry flooring.

— Howard Spencer

Public Affairs & Media, Coffs Harbour

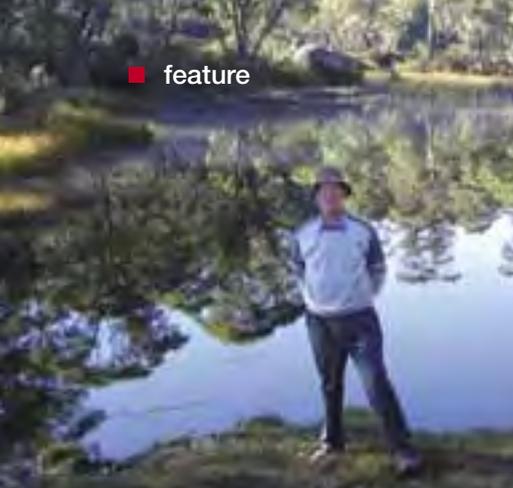
From top: Mill manager Greg Carter with some of the finished product; Boral's mill at Walcha saws a variety of highland timber species from nearby State forests; Highland timber species offer a wide variety of colours.

Photos by Howard Spencer



# NEW FOCUS ON HIGHLAND TIMBER FLOORING





The Hume and Hovell Walking Track traces the route travelled by two famous early Australian explorers, Hamilton Hume and William Hovell, in 1824. Sarah Chester joined a guided tour of sections of the track and reports on a beautiful and peaceful experience.

So often in life we look further afield and miss a gem on our doorstep.

While you dream of a holiday break interstate or overseas, don't forget about the humble but truly magical Hume and Hovell Walking Track that covers 440 kilometres from Cooma Cottage at Yass to the Hovell Tree on the banks of the Murray River at Albury, where the explorers carved their names in its bark.

I had been invited to join the NSW Minister for Lands, Tony Kelly, his wife, Anne, media and interested others on a two-day walk organised by long-time track guardian angel, Warwick Hull.

Warwick, based at Wagga Wagga with the NSW Department of Lands, has made the track his consuming passion for more than 20 years.

at the endangered Tumut grevillia (*Grevillia wilkinsonii*) recently discovered by local Tom Wilkinson. Moves have been made to protect the grevillia and propagate it commercially.

After lunch we traipsed off through the countryside enjoying the changing scenery from forests to rolling hills and moist fern-laden valleys.

We spent the night north of Tumberumba at Laurel Hill Forest Lodge (once a prison farm) in accommodation blocks aptly named 'Port Arthur', 'Pentridge', and 'Long Bay'. We also enjoyed some of our hosts, Owen and Cathy Fitzgerald, delicious home cooking.

We rose early and saw brumbies grazing on the lodge's lawn before setting off to watch the mist rise from nearby Paddy's River Dam.

## Following in the steps of Hume and Hovell

The Hume and Hovell track is designed to bring out the explorer in you, without the danger of getting lost. You simply follow a subtle series of signs featuring the track's logo – two stylised figures in Akubra hats and Driza-Bone coats.

While it would take 24 days to walk the entire track, our trip centred on the Goobarragandra Valley, near Tumut, and the Tumberumba region, following parts of the route taken by Hume and Hovell on their 1824 expedition from Lake George to Port Phillip.

Along the track there are numerous campsites equipped with barbecues and toilet facilities. To provide easy vehicle access, there are three major track heads, at approximately 100-kilometre intervals, named after the accompanying convicts on the 1824 expedition – James Fitzpatrick, Thomas Boyd and Henry Angel.

We lunched at Thomas Boyd Track Head, a camping ground with barbecue and toilet facilities and – joy of joys – hot and cold water, all beautifully maintained by a community trust. It's popular with campers and costs \$5 per person per night.

We reached this track head by crossing a swing bridge high above the Goobarragandra River, 23 kilometres from Tumut.

While at the track head we stopped to look

The dam is definitely a track highlight with the group taken by its simple beauty.

Seventy-eight-year-old track historian, author and local legend, Harry Hill, joined us there to give a colourful account of the dam's history and resident platypus population.

On the final leg of the walk, we took a break to listen to Forests NSW Chris Rhynehart explain the principles of sustainable logging in native forests as much of the track passes through State-owned native forests and pine plantations.

On the bus back to Wagga Wagga there was time to reflect on what makes this walking track highlighting our early Australian pioneers so special.

It began with the help of a \$1.3 million bicentennial grant in 1988 and now receives about \$45,000 a year from the NSW Government for maintenance and particular projects.

The track remains an evolving project, a labour of love for many like Warwick and Harry, offering something uniquely peaceful.

From my experience, the message from to pass on to fellow walkers is not to forget about the Hume and Hovell Walking Track. It may be somewhat low key, but that's what I found so attractive.

– Sarah Chester Public Affairs & Media, Albury

The NSW Department of Lands has produced an index map and six sectional maps with further information covering the Hume and Hovell Walking Track. To obtain the maps and further information contact the Department of Lands Infoline on Ph: (02) 6937 2700.

Top from left: Harry Hill at Paddy's River Dam; Hume and Hovell guardian angel Warwick Hull; Scenic Paddy's River Dam is a highlight of the walking track.  
Photos by Sarah Chester

# Preparing for the worst — hoping for the best

IF THE BUREAU OF METEOROLOGY'S PREDICTIONS FOR THE COMING SUMMER ARE CORRECT THEN WE COULD BE IN FOR A SERIOUS FIRE SEASON.

Following on from the hottest and second driest autumn on record, and a prediction favouring below average rainfall this winter, Forests NSW is preparing for the worst, while hoping for the best, fire scenario.

Forests NSW asset protection manager, Paul de Mar, said it was always difficult to 'crystal ball' the season ahead – for example the hottest ever autumn was then followed by widespread flooding in northern New South Wales.

He said Forests NSW training preparations were in full swing and they would be rolled out early on the north coast.

As part of the bigger picture, Forests NSW is identifying staff from within other arms of the NSW Department of Primary Industries with firefighting and specialist skills to complement Forests NSW resources.

"We are extending our training programs across the entire department and see this initiative leading to a more bulked-up firefighting force," Paul said.

He said Forests NSW had stepped up its incident management team training to ensure the safety of its firefighters and the efficient organisation of resources while fighting major fires.

In relation to firefighting personnel, Paul said Forests NSW had the advantage of being able to mobilise extensive firefighting resources from across the State

to attend fires in areas most in need of assistance.

Forests NSW has already commenced its annual firefighter health and fitness program, which puts all of its firefighters through rigorous tests to ensure they are fit and safe in what may be a gruelling fire season ahead.

On the equipment front, Forests NSW plans to purchase two D3 bulldozers for the south of the State.

"D3s are one of the most useful firefighting tools you can have in your armoury. Put them on the back of a truck and they can very rapidly be deployed to a fire where they can be used to put in fire breaks close to the fire," Paul said.

Forests NSW lightning strike detection system has also undergone a major upgrade for the coming season

"The lightning strike detection system has served us very well in the past and we also provide this service to National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Rural Fire Service," Paul said.

"The upgraded system is more 'user-friendly' and has better map production capability.

"This is crucial in a fire so that ground crews can get to the source of a lightning fire quickly, increasing their chances of getting it under control, and avoiding big fires such as the devastating 2003 fires that eventually took a heavy toll on rural communities and even major urban areas like Canberra."

– Sarah Chester  
Public Affairs & Media, Albury

## Surviving the big dry

Planting of 7.9 million Forests NSW pine seedlings across the State was off to a very dry start in June.

"Conditions were the driest that I can recall for the start of June, but recent good rain will make a big difference to survival rates," Forests NSW operations manager based at Tumut, Charlie Taylor, said.

"Significant rainfall will be required into spring to ensure successful establishment of new trees."

Forests NSW also planted 280 hectares of plantation hardwoods early in the year.

These trees, mainly in the north east of the state, have also been affected by very dry conditions in the first half of the year, but recent rain should help survival and growth rates.

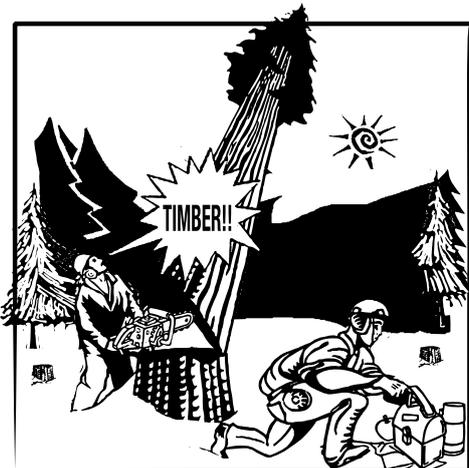
# Make the Links

State forests are busy places providing many of the things we use and do each day like timber, paper, clean water and air; recreation activities like camping and hiking; and habitat for wildlife. Can you list at least 6 forest activities people enjoy?

- 
- 
- 



With so much human activity, a safe forest visit means being aware and planning ahead. Pictured are three groups of people at work and play in the forest but something is not quite right. What could go wrong in each picture?



Forest NSW workers carry out regular checks in the forest to prevent people getting into danger. They follow six steps to minimise risks by deciding where certain activities can take place and when they can occur.

The six steps are look, think, plan, act, check and report.

Help the bike rider on the right rethink her forest visit.

Cut out all six strips on the next page. Order the strips in the correct safety sequence of look, think, plan, act, check and report.

When you have the correct order, loop and glue each strip to form a safety chain starting with the 'look' loop.





I have **reported** my itinerary to my family

I have **looked** up information about the forest I want to visit on the internet and on a forest map

I have **thought** about where I will ride and what food and water I will need

I will **actively** keep to the trail

I **plan** to ride from the Banksia Picnic Area to Green Valley with a friend

I have **checked** all my equipment and telephoned to check the trial is open

Now you have made the link between a safe forest visit and thinking ahead, make a safety chain of your own. Pick an activity you do most days like getting to school, then write a sentence about each of the six safety steps to make your own chain.


Illustration by: Rebecca Heuston

The more safety chains we make the more accidents we prevent. Try coloured paper, giant loops, picture loops or toilet roll loops. Get creative to stay safe at home and in the forest.



# Chief executive joins mentoring program



Forests NSW chief executive, Peter Duncan, has joined with business leaders from across the public and corporate sectors in an innovative mentoring program for young women.

The Lucy Mentoring Program aims to encourage the development of young women, who, given the right opportunities and support, will become future business leaders.

University of Sydney Bachelor of Commerce Student, Grace Kim, completed the 35 hour-program at Forests NSW, under the guidance of Peter Duncan.

"I was pleased to be involved with this exciting leadership program," Peter said. "The NSW Government is committed to increasing the numbers of women employed at middle and senior management and this initiative will assist in achieving this goal."

Grace spent time preparing and reporting on Forests NSW financial performance to senior staff, and also travelled to pine plantations near Bathurst in the central west of New South Wales to gain an insight into operational forestry.

"This was a real eye opener, as I actually got to see the grand scale and size of Forests NSW business," Grace said.

She said that the program had given her an insight into the importance of networking, self management and teamwork.

"Most importantly, I have learnt which direction to take after graduation, which I hope will be management accounting," Grace said.

For more information see [www.women.nsw.gov.au](http://www.women.nsw.gov.au)

— **Leah Flint** Communications, Maitland

## Forest Fun for the young

Forests NSW kids characters, Serge and Kim, have had a makeover. They have also made some new friends called Flo and Scribbly, and are ready for many new forest adventures.

The new-look crew make their debut in *Forest Fun*, a new colouring book for preschool and infants students. *Forest*

*Fun* invites first time forest adventurers to discover some of the many ways we use forests to live, work and play.

Activities in the book include mazes, eye-spy activities, match-ups, tracing and colouring.

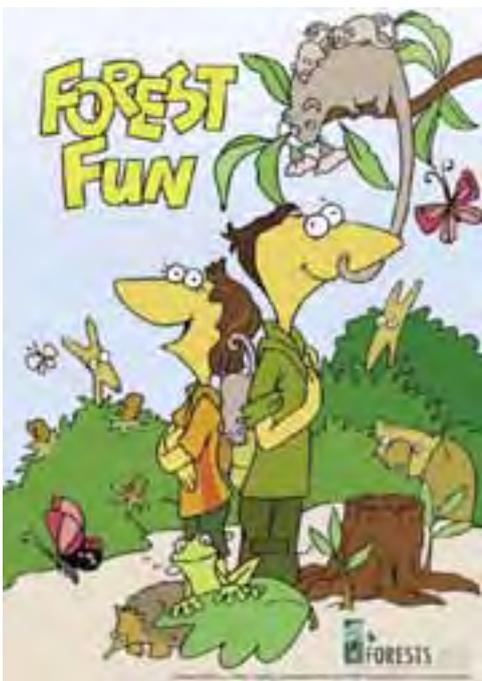
Keep an eye on Forests NSW website later this year, when the new characters will star in an interactive web adventure about forest recreation and cultural heritage in the *Parties* adventure.

*Parties* will be a welcome addition to Forests NSW other on-line adventures, *Ferals*, *Poo* and *Woodwork*, all created for primary school students.

For your free copy of *Forest Fun* call Forests NSW information line on Ph: 1300 655 687. *Parties* will appear on Forests NSW education web pages at [www.forests.nsw.gov.au/education](http://www.forests.nsw.gov.au/education) later this year.

— **Carmen Perry**  
Communications, Maitland

This free new colouring book is sure to appeal to three- to six-year-old children, and features cartoon characters Serge, Kim, Flo and Scribbly.



(left to right) Forests NSW chief executive, Peter Duncan, with mentor program student Grace Kim and Forest NSW operations supervisor, Ian Hanrahan at a harvesting operation near Bathurst. Photo by Rhonda Proudford

# Party pine set atop building

A plantation pine tree from Forests NSW Moss Vale region has been used to mark the final storey of the third tower in the Darling Park complex on Sussex Street, Sydney.

Forests NSW forest supervisor, Grahame North, said he was approached by the company building the towers for a pine tree.

"I found a beautiful, perfectly grown pine in Belanglo State Forest for them and they arranged to transport it back to Sydney," he said.

"The next thing I knew, I saw a photo of the pine in the *Sun Herald* newspaper and I thought 'hello, that is my tree'.

"Over the years, we have sold several pines to the same company to be put on top of the final storey of buildings in Sydney.

"Years ago, I was told that this was a European tradition where a tree was planted to mark the start of construction of a building and then when the building reached its final storey a party was held under the tree.

"But now as buildings are completed so quickly there is no time for the tree to grow so they just purchase a fully grown tree and have a party around it."

– Sarah Chester Public Affairs & Media, Albury

The pine sits atop the building in Sydney – a long way from Belanglo State Forest in which it was grown. *Photo copyright Fairfaxphotos*

## sept – nov 2005 events

1-31 September  
**National Biodiversity Month**  
[www.deh.gov.au/biodiversity](http://www.deh.gov.au/biodiversity)

5-9 September  
**Strickland Forest Expo**  
– Strickland State Forest  
An environmental education event for upper primary school students presented by Forests NSW, Rumbalara and Taronga Zoo Environmental Education Centre  
Carmen Perry education coordinator  
(02) 4931 6540

8-15 October  
**Weedbuster Week**  
A national weed management, education and awareness campaign  
<http://www.weedbusterweek.info.au/>

September – November  
**Cumberland State Forest activity program**  
A variety of activities for children and families, including 'Broken bread and bush tea' and 'Qigong in the forest'. School holiday activities also available. Bookings essential.  
Cumberland State Forest Ph: (02) 9871 3377

10 – 14 October  
**National Weedbuster Week**  
[www.weedbusterweek.info.au](http://www.weedbusterweek.info.au)

## hot off the press

– our latest publications

**Real stuff – Hard copy publications**  
(all prices are GST inclusive)

**Forest Fun (free)**  
A cartoon-style colouring in and activity book for children aged 3 to 6 years.

**Forest Facts and Figures (free)**  
A pocket guide to the latest NSW forest statistics, including hectares of State forest and the volume of logs harvested.

**Virtual stuff**

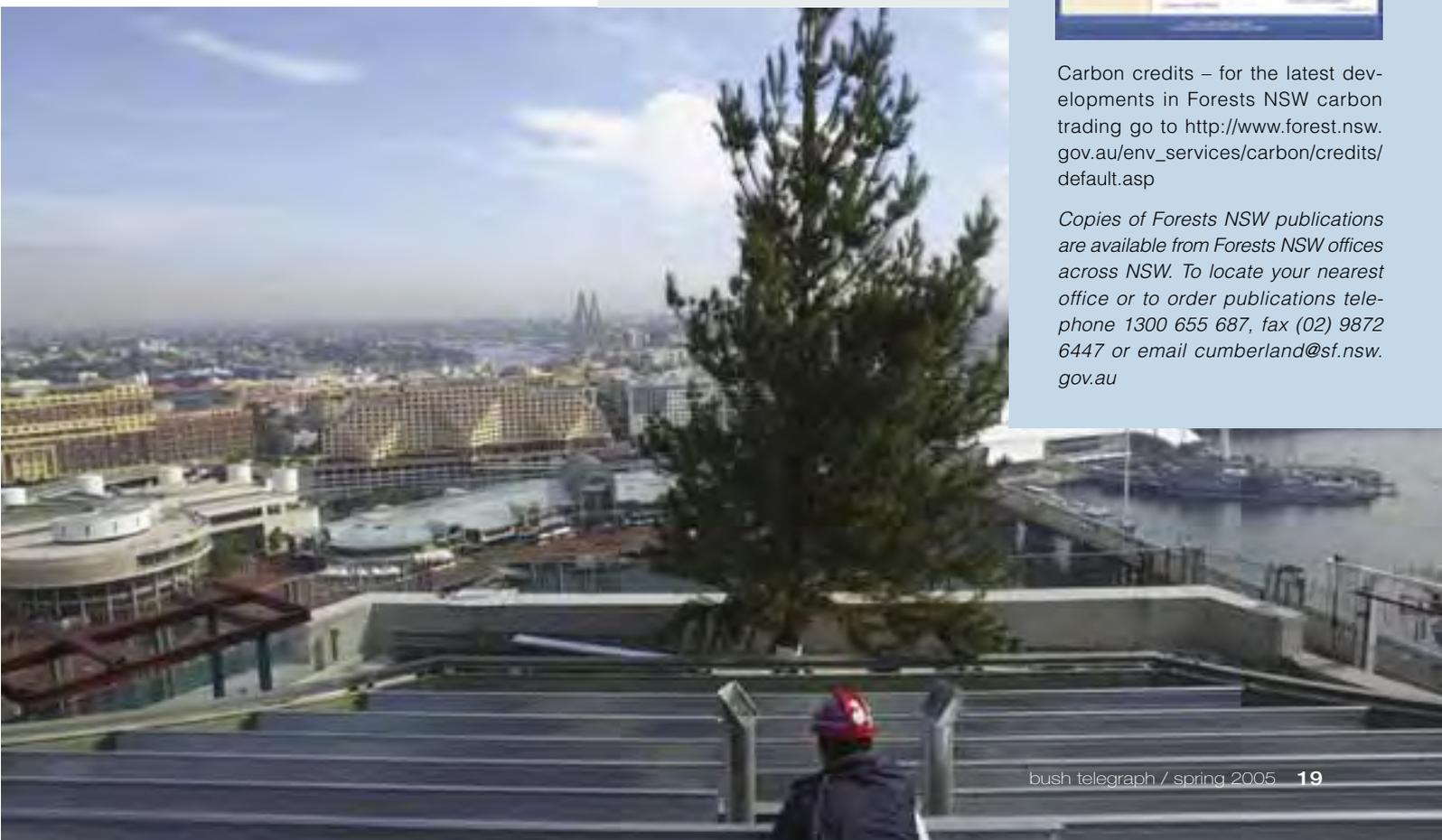
– **New info on our web site**

New look home page. For the latest in forests news, events and popular links. Forests NSW has a new look homepage, in line with the NSW Department of Primary Industries. Check it out at <http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/forests>



Carbon credits – for the latest developments in Forests NSW carbon trading go to [http://www.forest.nsw.gov.au/env\\_services/carbon/credits/default.asp](http://www.forest.nsw.gov.au/env_services/carbon/credits/default.asp)

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



# Drought-smart and low-water gardens?



Forests NSW Nurseries are Australian plant specialists, with more than 100 years' experience in growing trees. Our network of nurseries is spread throughout NSW providing expert local knowledge, plants for local conditions and the best planting advice.

We are a major producer and retailer of high-quality trees and shrubs for the home gardener and rural landholder. Within our range you will find the species to fulfil your requirements, be it planting for windbreak, shelter, land stabilisation, salinity, fodder, revegetation or ornamental usage.

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on planting this spring



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