

9th March, 2018

Submission to the Renewal of NSW Regional Forest Agreements (RFAs)

We support the continuation of the RFAs for the forestry industry in the Eden and Southern Regions of NSW. We are currently working in the forest industry in both the harvesting and haulage side and we are part of a third-generation forestry family.

If the RFA process reduced the areas available for timber harvesting operations in these areas you would see disastrous consequences for many of the towns.

In Eden, for example, many industries are either directly or indirectly associated for their livelihood for almost all of their income and the flow-on affect is substantial.

Just as an example our company employees 28 employees for the harvesting and haulage operations, we also employ several owner/drivers to compliment our own truck fleet. The machinery we use is maintained by our own mechanics and many other tradespeople and then there are the families with children at school, if the industry decreases and employees lost out of the industry it could even result in schools losing teachers if families have to move away – thus the disastrous consequences.

The RFA process can work as long as there are trade-offs – when areas of working forests are taken for National Parks or Reserves then other areas not in working forest areas need to be given back to the industry as working forests, alternatively give us back some of the National Park areas that were once working forests and taken out.

Government Agencies control the overall harvesting operations in all RFA areas so the harvest operators are adequately controlled by the Integrated Forest Operations approval and other licence conditions for operation and have been for years.

The forest industry is one of the most environmentally regulated primary industries in NSW and many issues raised by opponents of harvesting of native forests, do not accurately reflect the environmental performance of the industry.

