

Name: Australian Sustainable Timbers pty ltd

Postcode: 2420

About you: Business

Name of your business or organisation: Australian Sustainable Timbers

1. What improvements should the NSW Government consider making to the existing Private Native Forestry Codes of Practice?:

We have been working with the code and believe it functions quite well Our main concern is that the pnf code does not provide any protection against the high grading of the forest ie: creaming the best, most vigorous stems from the forest and leaving it in a poor degraded state. We believe there is a 'head in the sand' approach to the declining quality of Australia's forests and we are about to crash on the rocks in terms of timber supply. The main problem: - Harvest contractors decide what trees are harvested and what stays ie: contractors do the silviculture - This is a direct conflict of interest - Contractors are pressed to make money from their operations. This is becoming more and more difficult with relatively low log prices, high machinery and labour costs and poorer quality forests - There is no 'fat in the system' and they have to push the limits - the price of hardwood products is increasing but there has been little movement in royalty prices or contractor harvest rates (i.e.cut snig and load rates) - Each time there is a squeeze, contractors are pushed to become more efficient ie: bigger more expensive machinery which in turn = faster throughput/more trees/timber needed - The result is that the last of the best logs are taken, smaller and smaller diameters are harvested and no one is ensuring regeneration or looking at what is left for next time. - The code provides for having to retain basal area but the trees being retained are the trees no one wants- ie: suppressed, poor quality, damaged, poorer species Possible solutions? - We need to remove the decision making on tree harvesting from the harvest contractors - High grading/creaming could be solved by having trained, accredited and audited tree markers/silviculturalists in the system. They mark the trees to be removed and retained in front of harvest contractors. - We need some science back in the system - long term harvest rights may incentivise industry to carry out proper silviculture? - We need to educate private forest owners to encourage them to invest in the long term value of their forest - the courses that OEHL ran were great- do more! - Silviculture/ roading/ soil erosion courses were successful and practical- do more!

Please indicate which code/s Northern NSW Code of Practice you are referring to:

2. Do you have any suggestions to ensure the Private Native Forestry regulatory settings are efficient, enforceable and effective?: - tree marking - see above - education & training

3. How can the NSW Government improve the authorisation and approval system for Private Native Forestry?: the current system seems reasonable to enable accountability

4. What training and advice services would assist landholders, industry and the community?: The courses that OEH ran were great- do more! - Silviculture/ roading/ soil erosion courses were successful and practical- do more! - the silviculture booklets were great (Ross Florence) - particularly training pnf owners is important. There is not a lot of knowledge about how to manage forests in the community - training the trainer? train up LLS and other extension staff with knowledge on pnf

5. Do you have any other comments or feedback relevant to Private Native Forestry that you would like to share with us?: