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EWPA lecture draws praise from design students

COVER STORY P4



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We have lift-off: minister launches plan on high trajectory for industry

JIM BOWDEN

“WE know the government wants to be sure that its goal of a billion trees becomes a reality and not just a slogan and we look forward to helping ensure that the measures are indeed now put in place which will deliver the right trees in the right places at the right scale.”

Australian Forest Products Association chair Greg McCormack was addressing a packed National Press Club audience in Canberra last night before inviting the Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources Richard Colbeck to officially launch the federal government’s National Forest Industries Plan – a \$20 million visionary kick-start for industry.

It’s great to be here among friends,” said Senator Colbeck who was returned



1/ High priority... Senator Richard Colbeck (left) and Greg McCormack, AFPA chair, hold the National Forest Industries Plan document aloft after the plan's launch at the National Press Club in Canberra

2/ Welcoming the launch of the National Forest Industries Plan in Canberra... Andrew Wilson, director, national forest policy, Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, Rob de Fégely, co-chair, Forest Industry Advisory Council, and Paul Michael, chairman, Timber Development Association.

The plan – ‘Growing a Better Australia: a Billion Trees for Jobs and Growth’ – is the first major blueprint for Australia’s forest industries in more than 20 years and responds to AFPA’s key policy priorities of driving growth in forest products manufacturing and innovation and putting forestry at the heart of Australia’s emissions reduction strategy.

“This document addresses key challenges faced by our industries – in resource supply, recognition for positive environmental contributions, perception and training and skills,” Mr McCormack said.

“Industry also endorses the government’s determination to start development of 30 forestry regions or hubs. We need to ensure we have the greatest chance of maximising the value in downstream Australian jobs – and that will happen if the trees are located close to processing facilities.”

Senator Colbeck announced plans for two additional National Institute for Forest Products Innovation centres.

• More reports, pictures next issue

“WE MUST ENSURE THIS OPPORTUNITY IS NOT SQUANDERED

to his portfolio of minister responsible for forestry in the new Morrison government.

Greg McCormack said Australia already imported about a third of the softwood framing needed for houses.

“This new plan won’t change that situation overnight - but it is finally a step in the right direction,” he said.

“And it will require ongoing commitment from industry and all levels of government to ensure this opportunity is not squandered.”



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1/ Happy group at the National Press Club... Michael Hartman, CEO, Skills Impact, Melbourne, Howard Parry-Husbands, CEO, Pollinate, Peter Groenhout, managing director, PF Olsen (Aust), Sara Gibson, and Bob Gordon, national president, Institute of Foresters of Australia.



2/ Group discussion... Jim Houghton, statistics and economics manager, FWPA, Professor Jim O'Herir, general manager, forest research, University of South Australia, Clarissa Brandt, strategic relations and communications manager, Timber Queensland, and Simon Dorries, CEO, Responsible Wood.



3/ Representing the Apple Isle... Peter Volker, chief forest practices officer, Forest Practices Authority, Craig Jones, CEO, Forest Industries Association of Tasmania, and Shawn Britton, manager, Britton Timbers.



4/ Dean Hawkins, Visy, chats with Gavin Matthew, senior policy manager, AFPA.

4/ Catching up at the National Forest Industries Plan launch in Canberra are Kerrie Catchpoole, senior project officer, forest industries, Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, and Sarah Prentice, CEO, Institute of Foresters of Australia.

6/ Theresa Taylor and Penny Wells, representing FIAT, with Victor Violante, senior policy manager, AFPA..



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*Australian Forest Contractors Association (AFCA)



An industry-led program managed by ForestWorks

New funding to deliver core skills for aspiring construction workers

Prefabricated timber education courses at Box Hill Institute

JIM BOWDEN

MORE students will get the skills and experience they need to find a job thanks to a funding boost from the Victorian government for construction training in Melbourne’s northeast.

Minister for Training and Skills Gayle Tierney visited Box Hill Institute’s Lilydale campus to announce \$2.9 million in funding for two new projects which will develop and deliver core skills for aspiring construction workers.

Two new timber-related course in 2019 – a diploma of project management



Dave Gover... EWPAAs lecture to design students well received.



Carly Walters... leading new pilot project on pre-fabrication.

for pre-fabricated building assembly systems and a course in on-site installation of pre-fabricated building

systems, will put Victoria at the forefront of pre-fabricated timber construction technologies. These courses provide studies in working drawings and construction detailing for mid-rise buildings in CLT.

This new pilot project managed by the institute’s project manager, resource development, Carly Walters, will help meet industry demand for project managers and tradespeople with skills in off-site construction using the latest manufactured products and methods.

The funding will also support the development of new accredited and non-accredited courses in building information modelling. Courses are designed to train students to manage complex information across teams involving architects, building designers, engineers, contractors, facilities managers and trades.

To make it easier to access training, the government is investing \$172 million to make 30 priority TAFE

courses and 18 pre-apprenticeship courses that lead to jobs that are most in demand from Victorian employers.

The CEO of the Engineered Wood Products Association of Australasia Dave Gover made a timely visit to the Box Hill Institute last week to explain to a group of 30 first and second-year building design students the range of manufactured timber products available and their advantages in different systems and structures.

“The response from students was fantastic and the lecture brought a raft of questions about engineered wood, not only mass timber and CLT but the application of other systems using products such as LVL, glulam, beams, composite materials and adhesives,” the institute’s coordinator for building design and sustainability Susan Morris said.

“EAGER STUDENTS RESPONSE TO EWPAAs LECTURE

“The increased use of timber in buildings is of great benefit in reducing embodied energy and creating sustainable buildings,” she said.

“The biophilic design advantages of using timber for the health and wellbeing

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Cont P 5

Forest industries united on lifting safety standards across Australia

BUSINESSES of all sizes across Australia's forest industries have joined together this week in a united approach to lift safety standards across the board.

Australian Forest Products Association chair Greg McCormack said the 'Safe and Skilled' program demonstrated that the forest industries were committed to safety and investing in the skills needed to ensure its workers were safe.

"Together with the Australian Forest Contractors Association, our members have signed up to essential training standards covering

“MAKING SURE ALL FOREST WORKERS GET HOME SAFELY



At the Safe and Skilled signing ceremony in Canberra today... Greg McCormack, AFPA chair (centre) and Stacey Gardiner, general manager, and Adan Taylor, chairman, Australian Forest Contractors Association.

the breadth of activities in the forest industry," Mr McCormack said.

"A common approach to training will recognise the importance of having the right skills to do the job across industry and mobilise

our industry's workforce."

Along with common training standards, AFPA and AFCA launched 12 life-saving commitments to guide behaviour in the industry.

AFCA chairman Adan Taylor said the lifesaving

commitments draw attention of workers to critical risks in the industry and ensured that base-line safety rules were common everywhere.

"The Australian forest industry is varied and unique, but in every forest, on every road, at every log dump, the industry demands the same high level of safety," Mr Taylor said.

"Our workers know the key risks they need to be aware of and the Safe and Skilled program is an excellent reminder of those risks and necessary behaviours to keep everyone safe at work."

He added: "Making sure all forest workers get home to their families at the end of each working day is the driving force behind Safe and Skilled."

From P 4

of building occupants is also important and this was covered well by Dave Gover in his presentation."

Susan Morris said the EWPA lecture built on the knowledge of students and

also helped Box Hill Institute in developing new training resources for manufactured and prefabricated timber.

Qualifications at Box Hill Institute range from certificates I to IV, diplomas and advanced diplomas,

even associate, bachelor and master degrees. Vocational and higher education qualifications are nationally accredited and internationally recognised. Each year, the institute helps between 40,000 and 60,000 students

pursue a passion, develop their potential and kick-start their career.

On the cover: Teachers in design Mark Hilton, Abdul Rauf and Susan Morris with first and second-year design students at Box Hill Institute.

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Game on: Fire-fighting forester to compete in Sydney Invictus event

TAREE Forestry Corporation employee Matt Model will soon be swapping his fire-fighting kit for an Australian uniform in the 2018 Invictus Games.

The Invictus Games in Sydney from October 20 to 27 is an international sporting event initiated by Prince Harry to support the recovery of wounded, injured or sick armed services personnel and their associated veterans.

Matt Model will compete in indoor rowing and athletics.

"I'm excited and proud to represent my country – it's not something that everyone gets a chance to do," Matt said.

"I'm really looking forward



Matt Model... swapping fire-fighting kit for Australian uniform.

to getting to Sydney and joining the squad again. I'll have my wife and twin 11-year-old boys there supporting me and I'm proud to be a role

model for my family."

Matt is employed as a forest technician with Forestry Corporation of NSW working to help manage timber supply from the state's native forests as well as ensuring the forests remain healthy.

"The current fire season has made the training program a challenge, but not impossible," says Matt.

"It's been hard to fit the training in, particularly with a recent week of firefighting in Grafton, but somehow I've managed to find the time and energy. Otherwise my work in Forestry Corp complements my training. I like being on my feet and the active work helps me with recovery."

Matt joined Forestry Corporation after active service with the Australian Army. He was injured from a significant fall during operations to catch former Timorese rebel leader Alfredo Reinado.

"During my transition into Forestry Corporation I was made feel very welcome and it has been nothing but a

supportive environment," he said.

"My journey to the Invictus Games has been easier thanks to the great support from my family, community and forestry colleagues."

Matt will join 72 other athletes in the Australian Invictus Games squad in October.

The Games will host 500 competitors and 1000 family and friends and feature 11 sports.

On a trip to the Warrior Games in the US in 2013, Prince Harry, Duke of Sussex, saw first-hand how the power of sport can help physically, psychologically and socially those suffering from injuries and illness. He was inspired by his visit and the Invictus Games was born.

GREAT SUPPORT FROM MY FAMILY, COMMUNITY AND FORESTRY COLLEAGUES MADE IT POSSIBLE

The word 'invictus' means 'unconquered'. It embodies the fighting spirit of wounded, injured and sick service personnel and personifies what these tenacious men and women can achieve post injury. The Games harness the power of sport to inspire recovery, support rehabilitation and generate a wider understanding and respect for those who serve their country.

The Invictus Games is about much more than just sport – it captures hearts, challenges minds and changes lives.

Growing the future of South Australian forestry

\$4 million research funding investment to boost sustainability, jobs and economic benefits in partnership with industry

With the support of the Australian and South Australian governments, the Mt Gambier hub of the National Institute for Forest Products Innovation has up to \$4 million available for research grants to grow the future of forestry. Research projects could include: developing new products in relation to composites, extractives and bioenergy; improving workplace innovation, safety and efficiency; enhancing tree growing including forest health and genetic gain; maximising precision management and applying new technologies; improving the forestry social licence; and identifying opportunities with robotics, automation and artificial intelligence. Individual research grants will range from \$50,000-\$500,000 and will be for periods of up to three years in duration. Funding proposals close on Friday 7 September 2018 and should be lodged via email to funding.sa@nifpi.org.au. For further information, including a proposal template and briefing document, see www.nifpi.org.au

About us The Mt Gambier hub of the National Institute for Forest Products Innovation is a joint venture between the Australian Government, the South Australian Government and the forest and wood products industry with the goal of growing forestry into the future.



Australian Government



Government of South Australia



NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR FOREST PRODUCTS INNOVATION
MT GAMBIER

SEPTEMBER

18-19: FIEA Woodech 2018
– Rotorua, NZ.

Drymill scanning, wood machining, timber manufacturing. Visit www.woodtech.events

20: 2018 NZ Wood Resene Timber Design Awards Gala Presentation Dinner

– Grand Millennium Hotel, 71 Mayoral Drive, Auckland, New Zealand. Event to reward practitioners who have surpassed the 'everyday' with their professional skill and ability to deliver excellence to their clients. For further information and to book see: www.eventbrite.co.nz/e/nz-wood-resene-timber-design-gala-awards-dinner-2018

OCTOBER

1-3: 2018 DANA NZ Forest-Wood Processing Conference & Optional Field Trip – Wairakei Resort, Taupo.

Theme: 'Does the NZ industry have to be world class to compete in the world?'

One-and-half day conference, followed by one-and-half field Trip with nine Central North Island industry and industry-related site visits. Pre-conference afternoon / dinner cruise on Lake Taupo. Contact Julie Bell admin@dana.co.nz or visit www.danaevents.co.nz/2018taupo/

9-10: Private Forestry Service Qld's forest management workshop – Tony Salisbury's property at Rathdowney in southeast Queensland.

9am-3pm. Contact Bronwyn Lloyd on (07) 5483 6535 or email pfsq@bigpond.com

9-11: 2018 DANA Australian Forest-Wood Processing Conference & Optional Field Trip – Hotel Grand Chancellor, Launceston.

One-and-half day conference, one-and-half day field trip. Contact Julie Bell admin@dana.co.nz or www.danaevents.co.nz/2018tas/

13: Gala Queensland Timber Industry Awards evening

– Rydges South Bank, Brisbane. Hosted by TABMA Queensland, 6:30 - 11:30 pm. Dress formal. Contact Alicia Oelkers on (07) 07 3456 76065 or email Alicia@tabma.com.au

19: Victorian Association of Forest Industries annual dinner – RACV Club, Melbourne. Tickets available from VAFI in July. Contact VAFI on (03) 9611 9000 or info@vafi.org.au



19th Australian Timber Design Awards in Sydney.

Full details TBA. Entries open February 12 and close July 6. Judging period July 16-20. People's Choice voting July 23-August 17. Awards gala dinner mid-October. Visit www.timberawards.com.au

26: TABMA national industry dinner – Hyatt Regency Hotel, Sydney. Contact (02) 9277 3100 or visit www.tabma.com.au

26: Green Triangle Timber Industry Awards – The Barn, Mount Gambier. Nominations close 17 August, Green Triangle Timber Industry Awards dinner 26 October. For further information contact Prue Younger, event manager +64 (21) 2765484.

For more information visit www.gttia.com

NOVEMBER

4-5: FIEA ForestTech 2018 – Rotorua, NZ.

20-21: FIEA ForestTech 2018 – Melbourne, Australia.

FIEA annual technology event for forest resource managers, remote sensing and GIS specialists and inventory foresters from throughout Australia and New Zealand. Visit www.foresttech.events



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SEPTEMBER

16-17: 8th China Global Wood Trade Conference and Tour – Chongqing, China.

FEA Canada and China Timber & Wood Products Distribution Association. This will be the fourth joint-conference that both groups have been collaborated. The 2018 event is expected to set record attendance levels. See: www.woodmarkets.com/conference/conferences-china/2018-china-global-wood-trade-conference/

17-21: RISI Tenth International Woodfibre Trade Conference – Durban, South Africa.

See: www.events.risiinfo.com/wood-fiber/
Email: conferences@risi.com, Tel: + 866.271.8525, + 32.2.536.0748

17-21: Managing Eucalyptus plantations under global changes – Le Corum, Montpellier, France IUFRO.

Improving resource use efficiency in eucalypt plantations. See: www.iufro.org and www.cirad.fr

25-26: Developing DNA-based chain of custody systems for legally-sourced teak – Luang Prabang City, Lao PDR. Event will bring together stakeholders from

the field of research, private timber identification service providers, policy and NGO's from different teak producing countries like Myanmar, Indonesia and Thailand. The workshop is being organised by the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research in collaboration with the University of Adelaide and Double Helix Tracking Technology. See: www.globaltimbertrackingnetwork.org/event/developing-dna-based-chain-of-custody-systems-for-legally-sourced-teak

25-26: FSC Asia Pacific Business Forum 2018 – Mumbai, India.

Email: info@au.fsc.org

26-27: St. Petersburg International Forestry Forum – Saint Petersburg, USA.

This event will showcase complex forest products and growth potential; how to gain profit in terms of political crisis; overview of government incentives for the industry. And laws on timber recording and timber-related trading. For further information see: www.10times.com/regions-russia-forestry-complex-potential

OCTOBER

18-20: Timber Legality

Research Symposium – University of Copenhagen, Copenhagen, Denmark.

To be held in association with the Forests & Livelihoods: Assessment, Research, and Engagement network. See: www.globaltimbertrackingnetwork.org/event/timber-legality-research-symposium
Email: cph@ifro.ku.dk

23-27: 4th International Congress on Planted Forests – Nanning, Guangxi, China.

Congress aims to investigate the contribution of planted forests to green development in the context of global changes. Topics will include the sustainability of planted forests in the context of changing climates and the future role of planted forests in bio-resources sustainability, environmental protection and green development. See: www.efiatlantic.efi.int/portal/events/
Email: christophe.orazio@efi.int

NOVEMBER

5-10: 54th Session of the International Tropical Timber Council and Sessions of the Associated Committees – Yokohama, Kanagawa, Japan.

ITTO Secretariat. See: www.itto.int/workshop_detail
Email: itto@itto.int

Tel: +81-45-223-1110

12-17: 2nd DANA 2-day Central America and Andes Forestry Sector Investment Conference – Cancun Mexico.

With 2-day optional pre-conference field trip to teak and eucalyptus plantations; a large modern MDF mill in Villahermosa region; and a 2-day optional post-conference tour to Mayan archaeological and recreational sites. For further information: www.danaevents.co.nz/2018mexico/

12-18: XI International Workshop on Uneven-aged Silviculture: Challenges for increasing adaptability – Valdivia, Chile.

Uneven-aged silviculture is attracting increased interest due to its positive effects upon carbon sequestration, biodiversity, landscapes, and in its ability to provide a range of goods and services from managed forest ecosystems. Do uneven-aged forests have better options for adaptation to these future changes?

See: www.uas.uach.cl/2018
Email: pdonosu@uach.cl

• Please send any events listings to John Halkett via email: johnh@timberandforestrynews.com

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Forest practice refresher courses widen system skills in Tasmania

THE Tasmanian Forest Practices Authority is running a series of forest practices officer refresher courses as it continues to widen the range of skills in the system.

“These officers play a key role in the Tasmanian forest practices system and in order to do this effectively they need a wide range of skills and to stay up to date with developments,” chief forest practices officer Peter Volker said.

The Forest Practices Authority is an independent statutory body that administers the Tasmanian forest practices system on both public and private land. Its primary responsibility is regulating the management of



Refreshing... the 67 forest practices officers who attended the refresher course in Hobart last month.

forest and threatened non-forest vegetation.

The system is based on a co-regulatory approach, combining self-management by the industry and independent monitoring and

enforcement by the FPA.

Forest practices officers are trained and authorised by the FPA and employed within the industry to plan, supervise and monitor forest practices. FPA staff

provide advice on regulatory and technical matters, including requirements for the protection of natural and cultural values.

Cont P 10



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From P 9

The FPA also monitors forest practices to ensure standards are met. Corrective action is taken where required, which can include completion of remedial works, fines or prosecution.

Officers are appointed once they successfully complete a FPA training course.

The first of three regional courses took place in Hobart in late August attended by 67 forest practices officers.

“Feedback has been positive, with all survey respondents so far saying that they found the course enlightening and useful,” Peter Volker said.

“MONITORING PRACTICES TO SEE THAT STANDARDS ARE MET

Refresher Courses will be held in Launceston in September and Devonport in October.

The Forest Practices Code is the main tool for planning forest practices in Tasmania. The code was the first in Australia and is central to the forest practices system. It is the only forest code in Australia and one of a very



1/ Forest Practices Authority staff catch up during the tea break... Angela Gardner, executive assistant, Elena Tinch, environmental economist, and Chris Grove, training and publications coordinator.
2/ Sharing experiences... Chris Sing, Mitch Rospin and Nathan Petterwood – all from Sustainable Timber Tasmania.
3/ Writing a good forest practices plan... officers, from left, Amy Robertson and Kerri Spicer, consultants, FPA, Dan Ryan, Ask Forest Management Services, and John Webb, Norske Skog.



Conferring at the FPA regional refresher course in Hobart... Peter Volker, chief forest practices officer, and Stephen Walker, FPA compliance manager.

few world-wide to apply equally to public and private land.

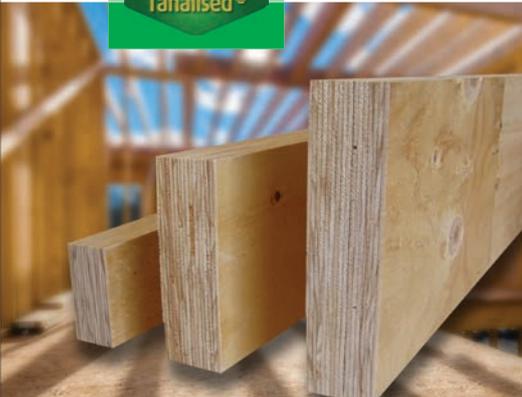
The code provides a set of guidelines and standards to ensure that forest practices are conducted in a manner that provides for the long-term

maintenance of the natural and cultural values of the forest. The guidelines and standards in the Forest Practices Code cover planning; building access into the forest (roads,

bridges, quarries); harvesting of timber; conservation of natural and cultural values; and establishing and maintaining forests.



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Is the NZ forest sector internationally competitive?

Case studies timely presentation at Taupo conference next month

A 'NEW-broom' government is now in power in New Zealand, and it's not only opening its heart but also its cheque book to assist the forest industry sector.

For instance, it has already committed almost \$500 million of forestry-related regional development assistance packages this year.

Nine years of neglect by the previous government has been replaced by a new Coalition hell bent on re-establishing the sector to its former glory.

Parts of the industry are at a crossroads. Probably only one single major capex project in the country has

purely focused on being internationally competitive in the last five years – Red Stag sawmill.

Others will need to follow before too long.

Unlike Australia, where the forest products industry is largely domestic sales focused, more than 75% of the harvest volume in New Zealand ultimately ends up in overseas markets.

So, the key question – 'Is NZ internationally competitive? – will be posed to delegates at the DANA conference in Taupo from October 1 to 3.

Some factors that will determine its direction are



Shane Jones... helping to transform NZ forest sector.

external while others are in the hands of industry leaders.

Given the tiny population of New Zealand, its industry has to rely on exports to deliver

products at an affordable price, but that requires scale to be able to compete on the world stage. Does it have any scale left?

"Much of it has failed/ splintered due mostly to dysfunctional management in the 1980s and 1990s – and beyond – but some is left," says veteran observer of the NZ sector DANA director Dennis Neilson.

"But it needs more – much more. It still has selective regional product focus in some areas."

Which again begs the

Cont P 12



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www.nzwood.co.nz



Red Stag sawmill... focused on international markets.

From P 11

question about international competitiveness.

To help find answers, DANA has invited a series of case studies to be presented at the conference.

Speakers will present on several relevant topics, including on the best managed and possibly most profitable forests in the world (Kaingaroa Timberlands); an existing major integrated forestry and wood processing company (PanPac); a major new arrival in New Zealand with an integrated forest products model (OneFortyOne); a new sawmill (Red Stag – the largest in the southern hemisphere, with much more expansion to come); a world-scale port operation (Eastland Port at Gisborne), a world-class forest research institution (Scion), a (likely) presentation on exactly what is the minimum size that a greenfield sawmill in New Zealand needs to be to make it internationally competitive – and much more.

Two keynote speakers will feature. One is NZ Forestry Minister Shane Jones, who is intent on transforming the sector with a plan to plant one billion trees and also attract the right kind of overseas investment to boost wood production.

The other is Dr Cheng Shouheng, vice-president of the China Wood Processors Association, who is an expert on the gigantic and growing Russian forestry sector and its wood export business

and potential. If any country can teach the NZ industry about the importance of scale and export focus to become internationally competitive, it is modern Russia.

Separately, Dennis Neilson, who recently visited Russia to investigate its forest resources and wood processing status and potential in detail, will share some of his observations and conclusions at the Taupo conference.

FIELD TRIPS TO SEVERAL INDUSTRY SITES

Immediately following the conference, DANA has arranged a series of field trips over the ensuing one-and-a-half days, visiting several sites, including: Tenon Sawmill; Natures Flame wood pellet plant; Permapine post and pole operation; and the new Contact Energy geothermal power station at Te Mihi near Taupo.

Separately, there will be visits to the new 'Geo 40' hi-tech plant located at the Ohaaki geothermal power station and a Taupo show-home using the new external cladding made from thermally modified timber (TMT).

Registrations are filling fast for both the conference and field trip.

To register, visit www.danaevents.co.nz/2018taupo or contact Julie Bell on +64 7 3492764 or email admin@dana.co.nz

See notice, Page 17

Visit to World Forestry Centre aims to develop a forest competency plan

DARCY VICKERS

THE Forest Education Foundation Inc, based in Tasmania, is travelling to the World Forestry Centre in Portland, Oregon, USA, to investigate and explore leading forest education programs, the conceptual frameworks, resources and practices which underpin these programs and encourage teachers to engage with forest education.

This opportunity has arisen through our involvement in the recent Australian World Forestry Centre's education institute workshop in Canberra in May, an initiative of the Australian Forest

Education Alliance.

The FEF has provided field and classroom-based opportunities to schools for over 25 years, made possible through the ongoing long-term support provided by core funding partners Sustainable Timber Tasmania and the Forest Industries Association of Tasmania. The FEF is exploring new directions in our approach to reach and support teachers and students in response to innovations in technologies, new directions in curriculum and our ability to meet the demand for forest education programs.

Forest education is vital



Darcy Vickers with forestry student Kate Johnson of Don College, Devonport, Tasmania.

to encouraging forest competency in teachers and students; supporting an understanding of forest

systems their complex cycles, energy flows, interdependence and interrelationships.

Research has shown, however, that teacher confidence and knowledge is often a barrier to teachers exploring forest education in their programs.

A key objective of the Oregon experience will be to develop a forest competency plan. The goal of the plan is to scaffold and support teachers to explore forest education opportunities.

• *Darcy Vickers is manager and teacher at the Forest Education Foundation.*

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Time for some tough love as life on the land runs out of luck again

DELIVERING a touch of tough love is part of my job description – which I wrote myself. Okay, it can be cold this time of year, but really some of the so-called rugged bushman around here can be pathetic – complaining about having the man flu. So sometimes I have to dispense a few doses of tough love – off your bums, out of the caravan and back on the job. And you know for the most part it works.

Now, I say this with admiration and humility in the face of a drought crippling farmers across New South Wales, Queensland and beyond. Tough love may be part of the solution.

I have a girlfriend, Chris, who with hubby and three kids runs a sheep and cattle property near Hillston adjacent to the Lachlan River west of Griffith. My heart goes out to them, poor buggers – no one told them about the 'lucky country'. To be blunt, their lives are absolutely shithouse – no other word for it.

The physical and mental effort needed just to survive is huge – dying stock, bills that can't be paid, and they have a long hot summer ahead of them. Can you imagine it?

So where does tough love come in here? It is clear that despite the views of knuckle-dragging Neanderthals in the government like Tony Abbott and Barnaby Joyce, climate change has arrived and is here to stay. It is, and will continue to impact, especially on the farming country out west.



Just alive... the physical and mental effort needed just to survive is huge – dying stock, bills that can't be paid, and a long hot summer on the way.

So the tough love part is to say to folks like my girlfriend Chris and her family they should think about giving traditional farming away. Things are really only likely to get worse.

However, there are some forward-looking options for this semi-arid country that will just continue to be at the mercy of adverse climate change. Growing trees may be part of the solution.

Okay, trees needs rain too, but being deep rooted, once established they are much less reliant on regular rainfall than grass and annual crops.

Not simple, I know that. More research is needed to grow trees productively on less than 500 mm of rainfall a year, and even then for long periods without rain.

I reckon Forest and Wood Products Australia should be placing a priority on such research. Some tree species

“GROWING TREES MAY BE PART OF THE SOLUTION”

TRUNK LINES



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are capable of growing in demanding, hot climatic conditions. There are the amazing and productive native cypress forests of course. Those west of Dubbo that stretch north well into central western Queensland. Also I am told – but I haven't seen them myself – Maritime pine plantations can be grown in northern Western Australia on areas receiving just 400 mm of rain a year. Wow.

Sure, compared with radiata pine plantations closer to the coast, growth productivity will be much reduced. But even minimal productivity would be brilliant compared to the sorts of

heartache and meagre returns from current farming activities on a lot of the semi-arid land.

Then there other tree-related financial possibilities, such as carbon farming and biomass-to-energy projects. If these sorts of opportunities are factored in stopping traditional exotic animal farming and getting into trees makes both climate change and commercial sense.

Certainly in the face of undeniable climate change, a realistic and gentle dose of tough love clearly points to the need to abandon traditional farming activity over substantial tracts of inland eastern Australia and adopt more climate change-related productive and innovative land management practices.

Tough love it may be, but trees look like a realistic sensible option and the forest industry should have a leading role in facilitating such a utilitarian, realistic transition. What do you think?

Catch you next time.

Cheryl

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Plantation kauri steps up to fight ‘dieback’ disease in New Zealand

AMID the mounting criticism of the current strategies used to counter the spread of *Phytophthora agathidicida* (kauri dieback infection) on protected/conservation land in New Zealand, it is worth noting that kauri is being increasingly grown in plantations.

In 2011, Crown research institute Scion produced a growth and productivity model for kauri, based on 25 planted stands established on a wide range of sites by private owners and government agencies. Eight of those sites were outside the species’ ‘current natural range’ – a human-constructed limitation which implies that kauri pine is currently most



Fourteen-year-old kauri plantation located north of Tauranga.
Photo: Greg Steward, Scion.

suited to growing in the upper half of the North Island.

In fact, plantings outside this range perform well once they get beyond the establishment phase. In more southern climes, and despite

the shorter growing season, kauri can grow on sites up to 300 m – but lower, north-facing slopes are generally better. In the north they can be planted in most areas up to 500 m, avoiding either

ACROSS THE DITCH



With **MICHAEL SMITH**

overly wet or drought-prone sites.

Some plantations are now close to 100 years old, with new plantings being established regularly. In the early years, seedlings benefit

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from weed control, while spacing (3 x 3 m at 1100 stems an hectare) is usually enough to encourage natural branch control and tree form.

Scion's research indicates that where fewer seedlings have been planted, some pruning may be required to produce clean, branch-free stems. And thinning may be needed at 30 to 40 years, depending on how a stand is developing.

Young kauri trees (comprising mainly sapwood) have similar wood properties to old-growth kauri, but lack colour and the presence of heartwood. And, unlike some exotic species, fast-grown kauri trees do not appear to lose wood properties when harvested at a comparatively young age.

Encouragingly, plantation-grown kauri pines are, on average, 12 times more



Scion is hopeful that field trials of seeds collected from healthy trees in infected areas will result in the young trees exhibiting a greater level of resistance, with the parent trees surviving exposure to the pathogen in the field. Photo: Scion

productive than kauri growing in natural stands – and up to 20 times more productive on the most favourable sites. They could be harvested for timber in as little as 60 years.

Such impressive figures may mean little in the face of the pathogen that is threatening the species' existence on conservation land. It has also been

detected in some planted stands – although not yet in areas outside the 'current natural range'. [Arguably, the

“CLOSURE OF NATURAL KAURI FORESTS COULD BE NEXT STEP”

susceptibility of those stands to infection will depend on access by people and machinery, and the genetic diversity of the planting stock].

Effective management focused on minimising movement between dieback and dieback-free areas has, in some cases, been extended to the closure of forests and reserves to protect the kauri and the ecosystem it creates and sustains.

Closure of all 'natural' kauri forests could well be the next step, given the time it may take to develop trees that are genetically resistant to dieback. That should signal an opportunity to enhance conservation efforts by using plantations to provide more alternatives to improve growth, establish new growing areas and find individuals and populations that are resistant to the disease.

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HEAD OFFICE

Timber & Forestry e-news
PO Box 69, Potts Point, NSW 1335,
Australia
Phone | +61 (0) 417 421 187

PUBLISHERS

John Halkett | +61 (0) 417 421 187
johnh@timberandforestryenews.com
Dennis Neilson | +64 (0) 7 349 2764
dennisn@timberandforestryenews.com

MANAGING EDITOR

Jim Bowden | +61 (0) 401 312 087

ADVERTISING

John Halkett | +61 (0) 417 421 187
johnh@timberandforestryenews.com
Jim Bowden | +61 (0) 401 312 087
cancon@bigpond.net.au

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