

Minister for Business, Industry and Resources
Minister for Transport
Leader of the House

Level 10, Executive Building, 15 Murray Street, Hobart TAS 7000
GPO Box 123, Hobart TAS 7001
Phone: 03 6165 9405 | Email: Minister.Ahertz@dpac.tas.gov.au



Rob de Fegely
Chairman, Sustainable Timber Tasmania
Email: rob.defegely@stttas.com.au

09 MAY 2025

Dear Mr de Fegely

As you would be aware, the Government took to the last election a policy of making available up to 40,000 hectares of Future Potential Production Forest (FPPF) land to industry through conversion to Permanent Timber Production Zone (PTPZ) land under the provisions of the *Forestry (Rebuilding the Forest Industry Act) 2014*.

Since the re-election of the Government, I note that Sustainable Timber Tasmania (STT) has been working diligently and thoroughly to identify up to 5 parcels of FPPF land that may be suitable for conversion through the process prescribed under the Act, and has kept me updated regarding progress on this action.

I note that the Government is yet to receive advice from STT on the particular parcels of land that may be most appropriate for conversion and I understand that this important work is still subject to internal review and approval by STT.

You would also be aware that STT has recently been provided with approval by Cabinet **S. 26**

S. 26

S. 26 It is critical to achieve a successful and timely outcome on both these processes to ensure long-term stability and certainty for our forestry industry.

While it is frustrating, I accept that STT's resources are limited and believe that it would be in the best interest of all stakeholders to prioritise those resources towards progressing plantation and native contracts with industry. Such an approach would align with feedback from industry that their most pressing priority is to achieve agreement on new contracts.

I therefore request that STT pause its ongoing work regarding the identification of FPPF parcels suitable for conversion to PTPZ land and prioritise its resources towards the plantation and native contracting processes. I would encourage STT to make the relevant stakeholders aware of this request to ensure that expectations are managed.

Once those new contracts are in place, I believe that the Government, STT and industry will be better placed to discuss how to best deliver on the Government's election commitment to unlock additional sources of wood supply for industry, including from both the private estate as well as public land.

I encourage STT to continue to work closely with industry to achieve outcomes which set our forest sector up for success and I thank you in advance for your cooperation in this regard.

Yours sincerely

Out of scope

Eric Abetz MP
Minister for Business, Industry and Resources

cc: Steve Whiteley, CEO Sustainable Timber Tasmania
Jason Jacobi, Secretary Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania
Craig Limkin, Secretary Department of State Growth

Released under RTI

Out of scope

From: Out of scope on behalf of Abetz, Eric
Sent: Friday, 13 June 2025 7:36 AM
To: Minister Abetz
Subject: FW: Concerns Regarding Mount Arthur Logging Plans

Kind Regards

Out of scope
Out of scope

Office of the Hon Eric Abetz MP
Minister for Business, Industry and Resources
Minister for Transport
Leader of the House
Liberal Member for Franklin

Phone: Out of scope
Level 10, 15 Murray Street, Hobart 7000
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From: Out of scope@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, 12 June 2025 8:06 PM
To: eric.abetz@parliament.tas.gov.au
Cc: rob.fairs@parliament.tas.gov.au
Subject: Concerns Regarding Mount Arthur Logging Plans

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Dear Minister Abetz,

Out of Scope

I'm getting in touch about something close to home for me, both literally and emotionally. My husband and I live at the base of Mount Arthur, on the Out of scope and we've recently learned that some of the Future Potential Production Forests (FPPF) on the mountain may be included in upcoming logging plans. We look at this area when we step out our front door.

Rob Fairs kindly passed on your comments when I raised some questions with him, and I really appreciated your response. I understand that the area in question is currently classed as regrowth forestry land and that any activity would be subject to a formal forestry plan. There's growing local concern in our community, however, and I wanted to reach out directly to provide some context from our end and ask a few questions.

My husband's family has a long connection to Mount Arthur. Out of Scope

Out of Scope They worked these forests back when logging was done with bullocks and human-powered saws. Even then, the logging was selective and far less invasive than modern practices.

If you walk the old tracks today, and we recently did as a community, you'll still see stumps with springboard notches cut into them. But standing beside the stumps are giant sassafras and myrtle trees that are estimated to be more than 1,000 years old. They're covered in staghorn ferns and grandfather's beard. These are slow-growing, irreplaceable trees. The term "regrowth" doesn't accurately reflect what's still standing in these forests.

Our community has been reviewing The List and examining the zoning overlays: Private Timber Reserves, Permanent Timber Production Zones, and Future Potential Production Forests. What's clear is that our area already contains a significant amount of land zoned for active timber production, and the majority of our community really supports this. However, when the FPPF layer is turned on, it shows that virtually nothing is left untouched. These areas, many of them home to old-growth trees and high conservation values, are the ones our community feels strongly should not be logged.

We are also seeking greater transparency. Many in the community would like to understand whether there is a clear business case for logging these particular FPPF areas—especially given public reporting that Sustainable Timber Tasmania continues to operate at a loss. It would be reassuring to know what economic, environmental and cultural values have been weighed in this decision.

Why Mount Arthur Matters

Mount Arthur is part of the North Esk River catchment, which supplies Launceston's drinking water. Its forests are home to numerous threatened and endangered species:

- **Tasmanian Devil** – endangered and highly sensitive to habitat disturbance
- **Wedge-tailed Eagle** – Australia's largest bird of prey, vulnerable during nesting
- **Swift Parrot** – critically endangered and reliant on intact flowering eucalypts
- **Spotted-tailed Quoll** – vulnerable and heavily impacted by habitat loss
- **Eastern-barred Bandicoot** and other endemic orchids, frogs, and invertebrates

Under the 2012 Tasmanian Forest Agreement, I understand an Independent Verification Process and Report confirmed the high conservation values of this area (it was earmarked for protection). It would be good to know if that report remains relevant to the current decision-making process? We'd be very grateful to know whether it will be considered in the drafting of the forestry plan.

Community Information Session – Invitation

To help our community understand the issues and have their say, we're hosting a **Community Information Session at the Nunamara Hall, on Friday 20 June from 5.30–6.30pm**, just before our community's annual Winter Solstice bonfire. (The event was booked before the new election was called.)

We would warmly welcome you, or a representative from your office, should you be available to attend. Alternatively, if you're not able to be there in person, we'd be very grateful if you could help us with some clarity on a few questions we hope to raise at the session:

1.
How real is the plan to log these areas? Is this something the community should actively be preparing for, or is it still under consideration?
2.
What access roads are being proposed or assessed? Many locals are concerned about impacts on residential and conservation areas and logging trucks in the road.
3.
Will the 2012 Independent Verification Report be taken into account? If not, is there an updated process for assessing high conservation values in these zones?
4.
What logging methods are likely to be used? Will it be clear-felling, selective logging, or another method?
5.
Why are private landholders on the summit restricted from clearing trees or building due to line-of-sight and natural values, while Sustainable Timber Tasmania appears able to proceed with large-scale logging? This inconsistency is creating frustration and confusion among landowners who have followed all planning requirements in good faith.

Out of Scope



Thank you again for your time and for considering our concerns. I know your schedule is busy, especially now with the election, and I genuinely appreciate your willingness to engage with the community directly.

Warm regards,

Out of scope

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Tasmania

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Level 10, Executive Building, 15 Murray Street, Hobart TAS 7000
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Phone: 03 6165 9405 | Email: Minister.Abetz@dpac.tas.gov.au



20 June 2025

Out of scope

Email: Out of scope

Dear Out of scope

Thank you for your email of 12 June 2025 regarding Future Potential Production Forest (FPPF) land in the vicinity of Mt Arthur. I understand that your initial email was referred to the Department of State Growth and further to your subsequent email of 18 June I am responding to you directly.

As you would understand Tasmania has a legal, renewable and sustainable native hardwood industry from which we source timber and fibre, including high-value special species and appearance grade timbers. Timbers for these uses cannot be sourced from plantations and therefore if they are not produced locally they need to be imported, at considerable cost.

Due to the shutdown of native forest harvesting from state forests in Victoria and Western Australia, we are seeing more hardwood timber imports coming into Australia from places such as the USA, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Solomon Islands, and South America. This is a highly unfortunate trend given the vast sustainable and renewable native forest resources we have as a nation.

To support the ongoing and significant demand for sustainably harvested Tasmanian native hardwood, Sustainable Timber Tasmania (STT) is currently undertaking a process to negotiate with industry new supply contracts to 2040.

To ensure that the contracting process is properly resourced, the Government has requested that STT pause work on the identification of appropriate parcels of FPPF land suitable for conversion. This work will recommence following conclusion of new industry contracts for both native and plantation timber, which is not expected to occur until first quarter 2026. Until the work on which parcels of FPPF land may be appropriate for conversion is completed, speculation as to what parcels may be brought before Parliament for consideration is just that – speculation.

You may be interested to know that Tasmania has the nation's highest proportion of old growth forests, with 1.2 million hectares of forest in Tasmania being classified as old growth. Of this, over 1 million hectares, representing more than 85 per cent of Tasmania's old growth forest, is protected in the Comprehensive, Adequate and Representative (CAR) reserve system. Less than nine per cent is located on Permanent Timber Production Zone (PTPZ) land and available for forestry.

Of the 812,000 hectares of Permanent Timber Production Zone (PTPZ) land in Tasmania – less than half (approximately 45 per cent) contains native forest that can be harvested. In fact, less than one per cent of native forest on PTPZ land is harvested in a given year. And when wood is harvested from our native forests it is regrown as native forest. This maintains our native forest estate in perpetuity.

In 2014, the Tasmanian Government introduced the *Forestry (Rebuilding the Forest Industry) Act* (the Act) to secure a 'wood bank' to provide for future sustainable forestry production in Tasmania.

The Act created a new land tenure known as Future Potential Production Forest (FPPF) land, which was set aside for the forestry industry's future use.

The Government committed at the last State election in 2024 to begin the process of unlocking 39,000 hectares of the 'wood bank' to increase the availability of high-quality native hardwood sawlogs to Tasmanian sawmillers. It is estimated that this would result in up to 158,000 cubic metres of additional high-quality sawlog being made available annually to Tasmanian sawmillers.

As noted above, the process to identify suitable parcels of FPPF land for conversion to PTPZ land has been paused by the Government to enable the forestry sector to focus on the development of new long-term supply contracts.

Any conversion of FPPF land must be on the basis that: the State's CAR reserve system is not compromised; that there is no negative impact on Sustainable Timber Tasmania's certifications; and that they maximise carbon carrying capacity, fire protection and recreational opportunities. Importantly, areas of regrowth forest with previous forest management and roading activity are being prioritised.

It is of further note that the overwhelming majority of FPPF was previously managed as forestry land.

In accordance with the requirements of the Act, changing the tenure of these land parcels entails a thorough assessment of conservation values, and balancing environmental needs with social and economic considerations. This important work cannot occur until the conversion process resumes, which is not expected to occur until late 2025 at the earliest.

Importantly, the Act requires the acceptance of both Houses of Parliament for the conversion of parcels from FPPF land to PTPZ land.

It is important to note that should a land parcel be converted to production forest, this simply means that the area is available for harvest, and not that all of that parcel will be harvested. As with any parcel of production forest in Tasmania, the forest practices system, overseen by the independent Forest Practices Authority, requires careful consideration of values, including natural and cultural matters, and planning prior to the identification of suitable coupes and any future harvesting operation. At this point, which as noted above is subject to a range of checks and approvals including requiring approval of the conversion by both houses of Parliament, specific matters you have raised in your questions such as access roading and harvest methodology would be considered. As such is not possible to provide this detail at this time.

All forestry operations in Tasmania are subject to the Forest Practices System, including the Forest Practices Code, which provides for the protection of important biodiversity values. The Code requires threatened species and threatened vegetation and ecological communities to be considered and managed in a protective manner where they may be impacted by forestry operations.

Importantly, no harvesting activity can occur without an approved forest practices plan. Forest Practices Plans are site-specific operational plans that describe how forestry activities must be carried out.

Forest practice plans must be prepared in accordance with the Forest Practices Code and must describe the proposed location of roads, how the land will be restocked with trees, measures for the protection of soils, water and cultural values, the estimated time for completion of the activities and other details regarding the harvest operation.

Tasmania's rigorous Forest Practices System is a best-practice approach to native forestry that ensures our industry remains sustainable and renewable.

I trust that this information provides you and your local community with clarity on the matters raised.

Thank you again for taking the time to write to me on this matter and I sincerely thank you for your heartfelt wishes to Andrea and me.

Yours sincerely

Out of scope

Eric Abetz MP
Minister for Business, Industry and Resources

Released under RTI

From: Tasmanian Government Media
Sent: Saturday, 9 August 2025 11:12 AM
To: Foster, Adam
Subject: Tasmanian Government halts access to Future Potential Production Forest wood bank



Felix Ellis, Liberal Member for Braddon

9 August 2025

Tasmanian Government halts access to Future Potential Production Forest wood bank

The Tasmanian Government will no longer proceed with making up to 40,000 hectares available for forestry from the Future Potential Production Forest "wood bank".

The "wood bank" comprises 356,000 hectares of land that was set aside to provide for future sustainable forestry production in Tasmania.

The Government will instead focus on maximising value from existing resources, including private forests, and ensuring growth in the industry through more innovative on-island processing.

We have made this decision in line with community expectations and further consultation.

The industry supports more than 5,700 direct and indirect jobs across Tasmania and is key to Tasmania's forest firefighting response.

More than 50 per cent, or 3.43 million hectares, of Tasmania is in formal reserves.

The Tasmanian Government remains committed to getting the balance right between creating jobs and protecting the environment.

Contact: **Out of scope**

Phone: **Out of scope**

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From: Out of scope
Sent: Thursday, 20 November 2025 2:29 PM
To: The Premier
Subject: FW: Protecting old growth forests [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Categories: CJ

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From: Out of scope <Out of scope@squadronenergy.com>
Sent: Thursday, 20 November 2025 2:22 PM
To: Rockliff, Jeremy <Jeremy.Rockliff@dpac.tas.gov.au>
Subject: Protecting old growth forests

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Dear Premier,

I'm a renewable energy developer. My family and I visit the Panama Forest regularly and we're very concerned about plans to log it along with 39,000 hectares of surrounding old growth forests.

I am calling for **Ben Lomond, Mount Barrow, Mount Arthur, Pyengana, Mt Victoria, and the Panama Forest** to retain their protection status ('Tasmanian Forest agreements', 2012) and not to be logged.

I am concerned about the removal of habitat for endangered species such as the wedge-tailed eagle, Tasmanian devil, and swift parrot, hold profound socio-cultural values, and provide ecosystem services such as filtering drinking water and carbon sequestration.

The plan, which requires parliamentary approval, has sparked opposition from conservation groups and the Greens, who warn that it undermines efforts to protect Tasmania's native forests. The Wilderness Society and BirdLife Australia have criticised the secrecy surrounding the proposal and argue that Tasmania should transition to plantation-based forestry instead of expanding native logging.

Do not allow Sustainable Timber Tasmania to remove these native forest areas.

Regards, Out of scope

Out of scope

Out of scope

Development



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Squadron Energy acknowledges the Traditional Owners and ongoing Custodians of the lands and waters on which we operate. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

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Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Management
Minister for Business, Industry and Resources
Minister for Skills and Jobs

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Phone: +61 3 6165 7770 | Email: Minister.Ellis@doac.tas.gov.au



Out of scope
Out of scope

Squadron Energy

Email: Out of scope

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your correspondence to the Premier of 20 November 2025 regarding protection of the Panama Forest. As the Minister for Business, Industry and Resources I am pleased to provide a response on the Premier's behalf.

I can assure you that the Tasmanian Government is committed to the long-term, sustainable management of our forests for multiple uses and the balance of benefits for all Tasmanians, including for festivals and events alongside recreation, tourism, the protection of natural and cultural values, and sustainable timber production.

Tasmania leads the way when it comes to balancing conservation with sustainable forestry. More than 50 per cent of the State is in formal reserves – one of the highest proportions of reserve land in the world and significantly ahead of any other state in Australia. This includes more than 58 per cent of Tasmania's native forests protected in reserves, including well over 80 per cent of old-growth forests and 99 per cent of Tasmania's high-quality wilderness areas.

Our sustainable native forestry sector is an important part of the solution to ameliorate and decrease the effect of climate change. As a renewable energy developer I trust you understand how important it is to use sustainable timber over other more carbon intensive products.

Due to the shutdown of native forest harvesting from state forests in Victoria and Western Australia, we are seeing more hardwood timber imports coming into Australia from places such as Vietnam, Indonesia, the Solomon Islands, and South America.

This means more carbon miles, and more timber being taken from forests in parts of the world with lower environmental standards.

Sustainable forestry is key to helping to reduce our carbon emissions, not only through increasing carbon storage through active forest management, but also displacing high carbon intensity products such as steel, plastic and aluminium with sustainable wood and wood fibre products.

As you may be aware, on 9 August 2025 the Tasmanian Government announced the decision to no longer progress the conversion or exchange of the Future Potential Production Forest (FPPF) land, including those FPPF lands in the vicinity of the Panama Forest. Instead, we will be focusing our efforts on maximising value from existing resources, including private forests, and ensuring growth in the industry through more innovative on-island processing.

Sustainable Timber Tasmania (STT) will focus on maximizing the value and productivity of Permanent Timber Production Zone (PTPZ) lands which are set aside for the use of industry.

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Of the 812,000 hectares of PTPZ land in Tasmania – less than half (approximately 45 per cent) contains native forest that can be harvested. In fact, less than one per cent of native forest on PTPZ land is harvested in a given year. And when wood is harvested from our native forests it is regrown as native forest. This maintains our native forest estate in perpetuity.

All forest operations in Tasmania, on both public and private land, are subject to the Forest Practices System which is enforced by Tasmania's independent Forest Practices Authority (FPA). The Forest Practices System applies everywhere in Tasmania including to native forest, plantations and threatened non-forest vegetation communities.

The Forest Practices System provides protections that ensure the environmental, social and economic value of our forests are appropriately managed on behalf of all Tasmanians. This is a best-practice approach to forestry management that is the envy of many other jurisdictions around the world.

I hope this information has been of assurance to you, thank you again for your correspondence.

Yours sincerely

Out of scope

Hon Felix Ellis MP
Minister for Business, Industry and Resources

16/12/2025

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