



FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN



Forest Management Plan

Custodian: Certification Manager

Authorised by: General Manager

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RFF acknowledges and pays respect to the Tasmanian Aboriginal community as the traditional and original owners and continuing custodians of the land managed by RFF.

Introduction

Reliance Forest Fibre Pty Ltd as trustee for the Reliance Forest Fibre Trust (RFF) is a privately owned company, formed in mid-2017 for the purpose of managing a hardwood plantation estate acquired from Sustainable Timbers Tasmania (STT), in September 2017. RFF also purchased the Bell Bay Mill in March 2018. RFF expanded the forest estate through the acquisition of the RMS Timberlands freehold plantation estate in December 2019.

RFF is committed to the practices and principles of environmentally sustainable forest management, the provision of a safe working environment, and excellence in the business of sustainable plantation forestry from the seedling to the market.

In alignment with the principles of responsible forest management, we do not engage in or tolerate corruption in any form. Our definition of corruption includes bribery, fraud, embezzlement, facilitation payments, or any other corrupt practices. RFF follows all laws related to anti-corruption measures. RFF is committed to conducting business in an honest, transparent, and ethical manner.

This forest management plan is the framework for the strategic management of the Defined Forest Area. It specifies the principles and management objectives that underpin environmentally sustainable forest management, a safe working environment, optimized economic outcomes and risk mitigation. It aligns the organisation to meet or exceed its statutory obligations.

Forest Management

RFF's Sustainable Forest Management Policy is a declaration of the company's commitment to the principles and practices of sustainable forest management and its corporate responsibilities to its staff, investors, customers, and the community. It is a publicly available document found on the RFF website.

This policy includes reference to RFF conducting business in an honest manner and not tolerating any form of corruption or bribery. RFF complies with relevant legislation, regulation, Government policies, codes of practice and other external requirements relating to our business, including laws and treaties related to anti-corruption and anti-bribery.

Guiding Principles and Objectives

Forest management in Tasmania is governed by the *Forest Practices Act 1985* and is implemented through the *Forest Practices Code* (FPC) which is tenure blind and applies to all Tasmanian forests. The FPC provides a practical set of legally enforceable guidelines to sustainably manage forests and provide protection of the natural and cultural values of the forest during forest operations.

All activities undertaken by RFF follow the requirements of the Forest Practices Code.

Beyond complying with legal requirements of forest management, RFF is committed to:

- **Safety** - Safety as a priority in everything we do.
- **Respect** - Be respected, be trusted, and maintain our integrity.
- **People** - Supporting our employees and contractors in every aspect of our business.
- **Reliability** - Reliable supply of products and services to our customers.
- **Sustainability** - Provide social, environmental, and economic value to our stakeholders.

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To achieve this, we focus on sustainability for the environment, economic, cultural and social outcomes.

Environmental sustainability

This entails maintaining and or enhancing:

- the ecological processes within forest ecosystems
- the forest soil and geological features
- food chains and energy flows
- carbon, nutrient and water cycles
- the biodiversity of forests - to provide viable and functional forest ecosystems.

The forest ecosystem needs to support organisms to reproduce, whilst maintaining its productivity, adaptability, and capability for self-renewal. Forest management needs to support and build upon these natural ecological components and processes.

Economic sustainability

This entails optimising the economic benefits of income, employment, goods and services from the mixture of forest uses within ecological constraints. It requires that benefits exceed the costs incurred, and that some form of equivalent capital is handed down from one generation to the next so that our use of the forest does not preclude utilisation options for future generations.

Social sustainability

This entails maintaining and enhancing the net social benefit derived from the mixture of forest uses while maintaining options for the future. This includes sustaining the relationship between ethics, social norms, human rights and development. An activity is socially sustainable if it conforms to ethical values and social norms, upholds human rights standards, and does not exceed a community's tolerance of change.

Cultural sustainability

This entails maintaining and enhancing the cultural capital of the community. Cultural capital refers to the collective knowledge, wisdom, cultural practices, and related environmental assets valued by communities and handed down from generation to generation by various means.

Scope

This plan is relevant to all RFF activities undertaken, from seedling to market, and all support functions.

Resource Description: Defined Forest Area

The RFF Defined Forest Area (DFA) is dispersed throughout Tasmania. As previously mentioned, the DFA comprises of two components. The initial DFA comprised of a parcel of coupes managed by RFF under a Forestry Right from Sustainable Timber Tasmania. This component of the DFA contains coupes generally between 10 and 100 ha with a median of approximately 30 ha on former native forest sites. Clearing of native forest for plantations by the former Forestry Tasmania was phased out in 2006.

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The freehold component of the DFA contains plantations which were established on private land. These properties are spread across the state.

The components of the DFA as shown in table 1 below, comprised of 48,453 ha plantations (predominantly *Eucalyptus nitens* & *E. globulus* with some *Pinus radiata*), 13,084 ha native vegetation (forest and non-forest) and approximately 3,133 ha of infrastructure and other land use (pasture, roads, easements, dams, etc.).

Table 1 – DFA Area 17 January 2025

DFA Summary	Area (ha)
Hardwood Plantation (Production)	48,385
Softwood Plantation (Production)	68
Native/Protected	13,084
Other Non Productive	3,133
Total Area	64,670

Age Class Distribution

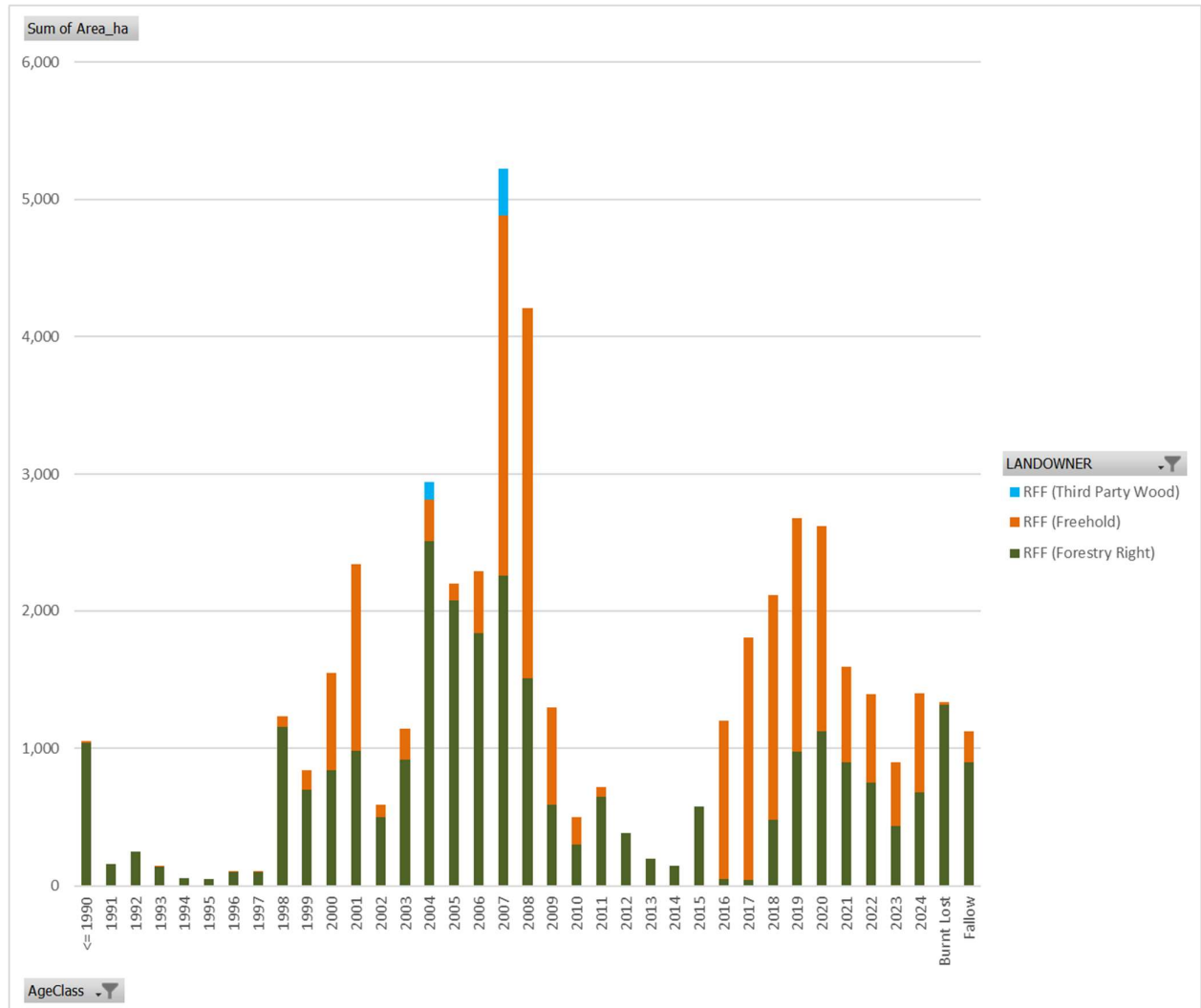
Figure 1 – age class distribution 17 January 2025

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The graph shows the age class distribution of the RFF estate and demonstrates that the majority of the plantation establishment activity took place between 1998 and 2008, with the recent increase being the replanting after the first rotation harvest was completed. All plantations were established with relevant approval from the Forest Practices

Plantation area

The Forestry Right component of the RFF DFA is predominantly located on ex-native forest sites. Plantations were established by Forestry Tasmania (now Sustainable Timber Tasmania) on State Forest (now PTPZL) from the early 1990s through to 2016. RFF purchased a Forestry Right over these coupes, comprising a portion of the hardwood plantation estate on PTPZL, in September 2017.

The Freehold component of the DFA is wholly on private property that was purchased in late 2019. These properties are dispersed across Tasmania mostly across the north of the state from Marawah in the Northwest to Goulds Country in the Northeast with some outlying properties in the south.

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RFF is managing the entire estate to optimize the value of wood fibre production for international markets. The same management practices are applied to both the Forestry Right and the freehold fore

Native Forest

The RFF estate has a proportion of native forest and non-forest vegetation. These areas were inherited as part of the logical mapping of the Forest boundaries and mostly included streamside buffers and small "islands" within the boundaries of the Forestry Right and Freehold components of the DFA and as pasture in the freehold estate which are subject to grazing agreements with pastoralists.

RFF do not log native forest for commercial purposes. The native forest is assessed as part of the FPP process and classified. If the forest is a threatened vegetation community of greater than 1 ha protection is provided by the Tasmanian *Nature Conservation Act 2002*. A natural values analysis of the estate has identified that while a number of coupes contain vegetation mapping units classified as threatened, none of them is more than 1ha with the majority less than 0.05ha. These areas are managed carefully when operations are occurring nearby.

All native forests will be maintained for biodiversity outcomes and intended to be set aside from harvesting.

Adjacent Lands

The entire RFF estate is widely dispersed across Tasmania. The Forestry Right component is distributed throughout the PTPZL for the majority of coupes the only neighbour is PTPZL, managed by Sustainable Timber Tasmania (STT) for either timber production or conservation. The Freehold land has multiple private properties on most boundaries that include forested land as well as agricultural land owned and is managed by both private companies and individuals.

RFF, as a responsible corporate citizen and member of the Tasmanian community, is committed to healthy engagement with all its neighbours.

Native Title

There is no native title claim on any land managed by RFF within Tasmania.

Maps and Data

A comprehensive GIS-based stand record system, Land Resource Management (LRM) has been developed for use by RFF. It is an application for managing tabular and spatial information.

The system has significant capability with the potential to manage many land and forest attributes.

Defined Forest Area Maps

Maps describing the DFA are available on the RFF website <https://relianceforestfibre.com.au>

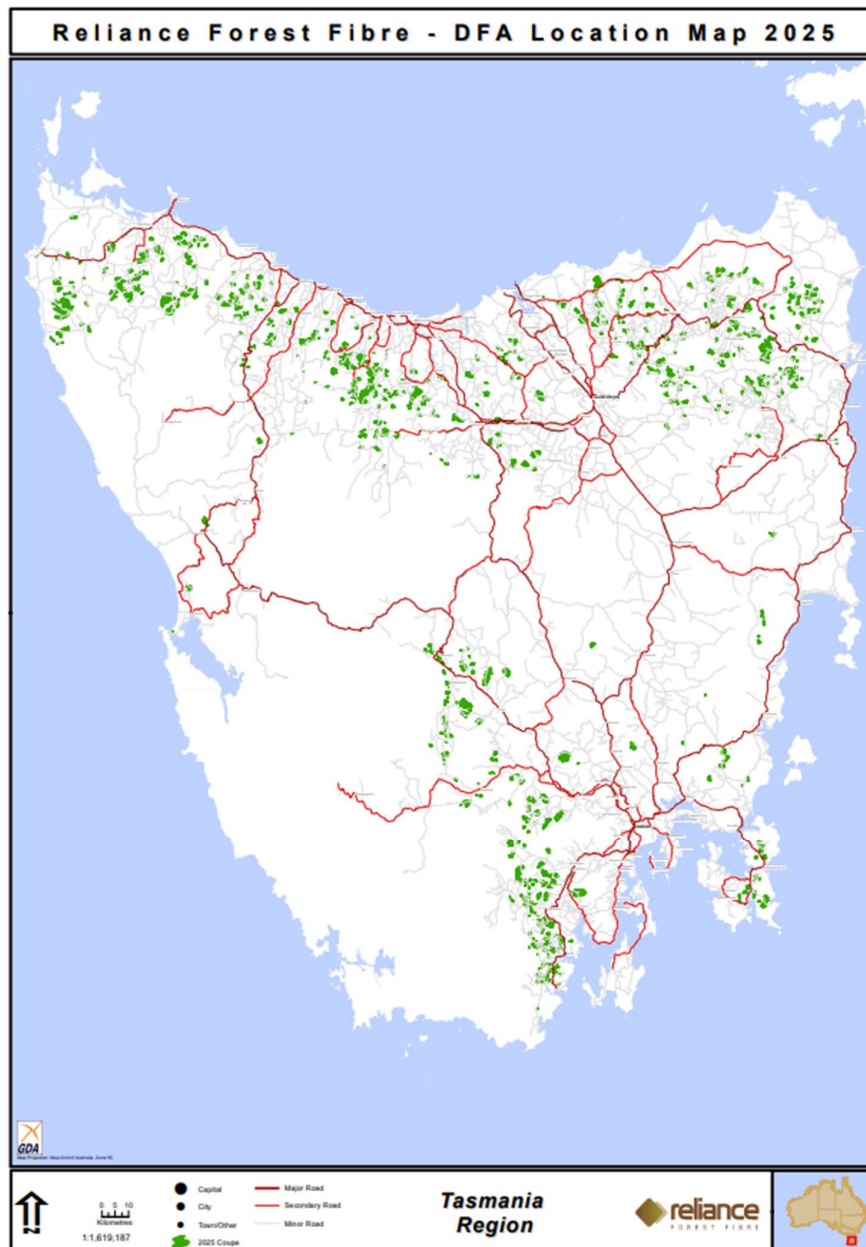
Figure 2 - The estate as of April 2025 is shown on the map below

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Chain of Custody

Products from the RFF DFA are chain-of-custody certified to the first point of sale or transfer. All product is identified as certified by delivery information that states the origin within the DFA, the harvest and transport contractors, the destination/customer and the certified weight or volume of the product. This is achieved electronically using LOGR, software to manage harvesting, haulage and weighing systems. It provides real-time traceable data to all parties. RFF uses LOGR e-dockets providing predelivery load information with the certified origins from within the DFA protected by geofencing. The LOGR dockets conform to the requirements of AS4707.

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Logs are to be securely loaded and everyone in the supply chain has a responsibility to ensure that log loading, securing and transportation is undertaken to comply with the Heavy Vehicle National Law Regulations 2014 and the Forestry Log Haulage Registered Code of Practice. The Chain of Responsibility for the transport process was introduced when the Heavy Vehicle National Law was amended on 1 October 2018, to provide that every party in the heavy vehicle transport supply chain has a duty to ensure the safety of their transport activities. Truck routes are specified by RFF and contractors are made aware of known hazards or restrictions such as school bus routes and times.

Forest Products

RFF manage the forest to produce woodchips and logs. The non-wood products managed by RFF include bees, grazing and leasing several houses on the estate.

Continual Improvement Cycle



RFF use an iterative process of Plan-Do-Check-Act model to create a cycle of continual improvement.

As part of RFFs commitment to continual improvement, management documents will be reviewed on a five-yearly basis or as required. The RFF process of internal and external auditing, thorough and detailed incident investigation, as well as a process of ongoing operational monitoring, will provide a framework for continual improvement.

Positive stakeholder comment/feedback received is also used to enhance the Forest Management Plan.

Legislative Requirements

Tasmania's forest management system encompasses a range of legislation administered by several State Government agencies and authorities and applies to both public and private land tenures.

The full list of relevant legislation is extensive but the following key Tasmanian legislation underpins the forest management system:

- *The Forest Practices Act 1985 and Forest Practices Regulations 2017*, which provide for sustainable forest management associated with the growing and harvesting of forests on public and private land
- *The Forest Management Act 2013*, which prescribes the Permanent Timber Production Zone Land and the Forestry Corporation (now Sustainable Timber Tasmania) as the land manager
- *The Regional Forest Agreement (RFA) a bilateral agreement between the Tasmanian and Australian governments, first signed on 8 November 1997. It is a framework document that is underpinned by*

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Tasmania's forest management system (including legislation, policies, codes, plans and management practices). The 1997 Tasmanian RFA was varied on 18 August 2017 by the Australian and Tasmanian governments to establish a 20-year rolling extension

- *The Nature Conservation Act 2002 and the Threatened Species Protection Act 1995* which provide protection for listed flora, fauna and threatened vegetation communities
- *The National Parks and Reserves Management Act 2002* which prescribes management requirements for much of the Tasmanian reserve system.

3 Year Plans

It is a statutory requirement under the Forest Practices Act (section 27) for any company producing 100,000 tonnes of wood or more per year to submit a 3 Year Plan to the FPA. Section 27(5) requires a summary of the plan to be sent to each local authority exercising jurisdiction over the transport route. This has resulted in the industry holding annual consultation meetings with local government

RFF as a larger forest company, (producing more than 100,000 tonnes of wood product annually) is required to produce three-year wood production forecasts that include:

- Locations of land from which timber is intended to be harvested
- Approximate volumes to be harvested from each location
- Routes for transport from each location
- Reafforestation measures that are proposed

The Three Year Plans are developed utilising information from the long term estate harvesting schedule. RFF participates in the annual three-year forest industry planning meetings with councils.

Forest Values

Carbon Stocks

An estimate of current and future carbon is calculated using equations developed specifically for Tasmanian native forests and *E nitens* and *E. globulus* plantations. The calculations are based on inventory estimates for merchantable volume. RFF manages the estate to maintain the level of carbon sequestered to an approximate stable amount, so future carbon stocks are at least equal to current levels.

Sustainable forest management and silvicultural improvements including improvements in the areas of establishment, tree breeding and growth contribute to an expected support and potentially increase carbon stored in the forest over time.

Climate Change

Anthropogenic climate change is recognised as an issue to be monitored and managed. At this point, predictions from climate scientist indicate an increase in temperature but no change to total rainfall. A change in the rainfall distribution over a year could lead to an overall moisture deficit. Weather changes will be monitored.

Current activities to create an active response to climate changes are:

- Improving detection and response to bushfires to reduce impacts

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- Maintaining some provenances from Northern NSW in our seed orchard to allow for a range of climate adaptation in the seed produced.
- working towards reducing the burning of logging slash through changing silvicultural practice
- investigating new site prep technology and looking at options for the supply of biomass material.

RFF endeavours to minimise fossil fuel use by:

- Maintaining plantation health and vigour to increase harvesting efficiency
- Encouraging the use of modern fuel-efficient vehicles and plant adhering to maintenance schedules prescribed by the manufacturer
- The use of the shortest legal cartage routes and rail where possible.

Note: Sustainable Timber Tasmania (STT) retains entitlement to carbon rights on the Forestry Right component of the estate.

Biodiversity

An estate wide analysis of natural values undertaken by private consultant ECO^{tas} has demonstrated that the Reliance Forest Fibre coupes support biodiversity values that can be appropriately managed through the existing provisions of the Tasmanian Forest Practices system using the tools, databases and planning prescriptions.

Threatened Species Management

Tasmania's Forest Practices system provides a comprehensive mechanism for managing the biodiversity values found in forest operations. FPOs use biodiversity evaluation sheets and interrogate various databases and property history documents as part of the preparation process for drawing up an FPP to cover an area to be harvested. Databases for known sites and predicted zones include the Conserve Database administered through STT and the FPA's Biodiversity Values Database updated through the Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania (NRE Tas) Natural Values Atlas. Any information gained from the desktop analysis is always verified in the field by the FPO as part of the field inspection process.

Flora

Flora values are assessed during the development of the site-specific FPP. FPOs are trained in the use of the regionally specific Forest Botany Manuals and assess the coupe for vegetation communities and including Rare and Threatened Communities and species. FPA specialists may be contacted and site-specific plans developed to manage any impacts of forest operations.

Fauna

Fauna assessments are undertaken during the development of an FPP. FPOs have access to GIS databases and known locations are identified and incorporated into the planning system. FPOs are trained in the use of the Threatened Fauna Advisor enabling them to generate species prescriptions to inform the FPP and provide operational outcomes.

The Threatened Fauna Advisor is a joint development between the FPA and the Threatened Species Unit of NRE Tas. The Agreed Procedures provide equivalent or greater protection than that provided by the *Threatened Species Protection Act 1995*.

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Soil and Water Resources

Soils

The maintenance and care of soils are fundamental to sustainable forest management and the long-term productivity of the estate. Soil types are identified during the development of FPPs, and operational plans are adapted to minimise nutrient loss, control and prevent unacceptable rates of erosion and landslides, minimise soil compaction and puddling and mixing of topsoils and subsoils.

All forest soils are mapped and managed to conserve the soil properties. The FPC and guidelines provide prescriptions for the management of forest operations based on erosion class and landslide hazard. Sensitive soils are managed to minimise pressure from animal populations. Specific issues are also addressed that may impact forest roading and access. FPA specialists are engaged when issues cannot be resolved.

Rehabilitation of temporary tracks and landings is undertaken as soon as practicable after the completion of activities.

Water

RFF recognises the need to maintain or improve water quality associated with the management of its estate. The water protection provisions in the Forest Practices Code 2020 are recognised by the State Government Policy on Water Quality Management.

All watercourses require protection during forest operations. The type of protection required depends on the nature of the catchment, size and permanence of the watercourse, the volume of water carried and any natural and cultural values.

The FPC provides for stream buffers of natural vegetation with minimum width prescriptions from 10m to 40m that are dependent on catchment size. Soil erosion affects the quality of runoff water and potential stream turbidity. Forestry tracks and firebreaks are cross drained with inter-drain distance depending on slope and soil erosion class. These drains reduce flow velocity and disperse water into the surrounding vegetation.

The widespread distribution of the estate provides a straightforward approach to coupe dispersal and therefore impacts across the landscape. The FPC provides strict provisions for the protection of any town and domestic water catchments and intakes, special provisions are required in the FPP where a domestic intake is within 2km of a proposed operation. Harvest plans for catchments are now being viewed by FPA from all companies operating in a catchment to ensure the total harvested in a year is not more than 5%.

Geomorphology

The RFF estate consists of plantations established on former pasture and native forest sites dispersed throughout Tasmania. The majority of geomorphological issues have been addressed at establishment with areas excluded from clearing, cultivation and planting. However, if geomorphological features or karst issues are identified during FPP preparation, they will be addressed through the FPP planning process with the input of FPA specialists.

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Cultural Values

RFF planning recognises the need for the identification and protection of Aboriginal heritage and cultural heritage.

Indigenous

There are no existing rights or land title claims over the DFA.

The protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage in Tasmania is principally governed by the Aboriginal Relics Act 1975. Under this Act, Aboriginal cultural heritage is defined as any place, site or object made or created by, or bearing the sign of the activities of the original inhabitants of Tasmania or their descendants. The Aboriginal Relics Act 1975 protects all Aboriginal relics; interference with a relic can only occur consistent with a permit issued by the responsible Minister.

When planning an FPP Aboriginal cultural heritage values are identified and planned for according to FPA procedures. Identification of previously known sites is undertaken by interrogating the Conserve database curated by STT and the Aboriginal Heritage Register administered by Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania. The information in both databases is sensitive and confidential and can only be accessed by FPA-endorsed Aboriginal heritage FPOs and database managers.

When known or new sites are identified they are field verified and management prescriptions are developed for the protection of the site. Monitoring is undertaken during operations to ensure the site-specific prescriptions are being applied and protection of the values is being achieved.

Non-indigenous

FPPs are developed with an awareness of existing cultural heritage sites. The FPA has developed a planning guideline based on extensive experience and research into the cultural heritage sites within Tasmanian forests. *"Significant heritage sites and places are protected through identification, recording and assessment during planning, prescriptions in forest practices plans, and implementation during operations."* FPA 2017

New sites are unlikely to be found in the RFF plantation estate and known sites will have an existing management prescription or have been excluded from the planted area.

Forest Productive Capacity

Silvicultural Systems

RFF's plantation management model aims to produce fibre and solid wood, and silviculture may be adjusted to produce optimum outcomes. The focus is on best practice site preparation and establishment and maintaining plantation health and vigour.

The primary management objective is to maximise the value of wood products grown and harvested from the land as well as maintain the long-term productivity of the land and other environmental values. Although this objective is the main driver it is also influenced by other site-specific factors such as soil, rainfall, altitude and exposure, and factors pertinent at the time including commercial/marketing factors, and operational constraints.

Conversion of natural ecosystems

The forest estate managed by RFF has been converted from natural ecosystems to plantation at sometime in the past. RFF does not convert any native vegetation to plantation.

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Species Selection

Eucalyptus nitens (shining gum) is the predominant plantation species in the RFF estate, comprising approximately 80% of the planted area and is well suited to productive sites up to an elevation of 700m ASL. The RFF estate will be replanted mainly to *E nitens*, however, *E globulus* (Tasmanian Blue Gum) is a preferred species in some markets and will be planted on appropriate sites, usually below 300m ASL. *Pinus radiata* will be considered as an option for planting where the site is most suitable for this species.

RFF does not use genetically modified organisms/trees (GMO's) in its forest management. RFF only uses seedlings grown from seed sourced from RFF seed orchards using traditional crop breeding methods.

Plantation establishment

Optimum establishment techniques, seedling survival and growth rates are fundamental to achieving vigorous and productive plantations.

RFF seed orchards identify seed which has the highest factors for growth, density and pulp yield. The seed is grown at local nurseries with the systems to manage risk and provide seedlings to the specifications needed for the different regions.



Establishment operations aim to:

- Reduce excessive competition via mechanical and/or chemical means that may impact planting efficiency, tree growth and development
- Ensure seedling survival by planting during the spring period
- Use the most appropriate cultivation and planting configuration. This may include planting within established rip lines, between stumps
- Improve growth rates with the individual seedling application of controlled-release fertiliser at the time of planting
- Reduce browsing pressure through rapid early growth and using approved control measures when browsing pressure reaches trigger points
- Minimise costs while providing optimum growing conditions

Regular monitoring of establishment works ensures quality standards are maintained.

Research and Development

RFF is part of a group of companies represented in the Forest and Wood Products Association and appropriate research groups. The RFF estate also hosts UTAS research projects focused on leaf area index as a measure of fertiliser optimisation. The DPIPWE Save the



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Devil Program undertakes work in the RFF estate on the Tasman Peninsula.

RFF is a contributor to several National Institute for Forest innovation NIFPI projects. These currently include Eagle Eye a technologically advanced project investigating wedge-tailed eagle ecology.

Rate of harvest

Harvest rates are aligned with RFF's business objectives and market opportunities while being cognisant of the estate's capability to produce over the long term. Due to the nature of the DFA, the age structure is variable, however, the long-term aim is to manage the harvest schedule to produce a reasonably consistent annual harvest rate across the estate.

Monitoring of Forest growth

Growth models

Growth and yield system outputs are used with Woodstock planning and optimization software to help produce strategic, and tactical plans that meet business economic and sustainability goals.

Forest Assessment

RFF undertakes estate-based inventory on a preharvest and recovered volume basis. The data collected informs the growth models to predict yield and input into the Woodstock model.

Harvesting

All harvesting is undertaken in accordance with prescriptions in a certified Forest Practices Plan which authorises the carrying out of forest practices. RFF engages contractors with specialist skills, modern equipment and safety systems to undertake the scheduled harvesting of the plantation estate. Contractors are highly trained, and the competency of all harvesting crew members is regularly assessed. Before commencing operation, the RFF Harvesting Supervisor, together with the contractor, develops a Forest Operations Safety Plan (FOS plan). The FOS plan is governed by the Forest Safety Code and is signed by the RFF Supervisor and all harvesting crew members. It identifies known and likely hazards to be present at a worksite and establishes risk mitigation measures to reduce the risk to an acceptable level. Risks identified during the operation can be added and evaluated.

RFF harvesting operations aim to optimise utilisation using the most appropriate and cost-effective harvesting configuration for the terrain and considering the products to be produced. This may also be affected by the cart distance and haulage configuration- which may include rail. Haulage contractors are responsible for safe loading and delivery of products using nominated cart routes and observing load limits, speed limits and school bus times on known bus routes.

Reforestation

After harvest, the plantation areas will be reforested with plantation species for the next rotation.

Any reserve area of native vegetation which is identified as degraded, will be reforested with appropriate native species.

Salvage operations

In cases where the forest estate has been damaged salvage operations will be planned and undertaken to recover forest products and to minimise adverse environmental, social and economic impacts.

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These operations will include reserve areas only when there are safety, fire management, rehabilitation, or other justified reasons. Any operation will maintain remaining significant biodiversity values. The aim will be to re-establish reserves to the condition they were in before damage occurred.

Fire (Unplanned)

The RFF Fire Action Plan provides a systematic approach to the suppression of unplanned fire suppression in line with State fire management protocols. The Fire Action Plan is annually updated as it is both an operational plan and a reference document. It includes an outline of procedures relating to responsibility, preparedness, the detection and suppression of fires, a register of available resources and a fire duty roster across the organisation. RFF is represented on the Forest Industry Fire Management Committee (FIFMC) that oversees the procedure, *Fire Prevention at Forest Operations*. Its objective is to minimise the incidence of wildfire resulting from forest operations.

Fire management priority is to protect life, property, plantation assets and prevent the spread of fire from the RFF estate onto neighbouring land. RFF supports, in principle, the Inter-Agency Fire Management Protocol with Tasmania Fire Service, Parks and Wildlife Service and Sustainable Timber Tasmania, an annually updated cooperation agreement with weight of first attack as a priority regardless of tenure. RFF conducts pre-season audits on mandatory equipment of all harvesting contractors with repeat checks over the summer fire period to ensure that required equipment is on-site and operational and personnel are trained in basic fire fighting as per the industry guidelines. Each operation must have two persons trained in Fire Weather Evaluation with one person and the defined equipment present at all times. Operations are shut down when measured fire weather conditions exceed industry agreed trigger points.

Larger fires will be managed under the Incident Control System, ICS. Where RFF assets are involved or threatened appropriate resources will be provided, including support, to Incident Management Team.



Forest Ecosystem Health

Damage Agents

Plantations and native forests are continually subjected to impacts from damage agents including fire, wind, floods, insects, disease, weeds, hybridisation and vertebrate animals. Forest management aims to minimise the damage caused to plantations by ensuring infrastructure is maintained and

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providing ready access and resources - including water points, to help prevent fire from entering the RFF estate or spreading to other tenures. Routine monitoring of the estate including harvesting and establishment operations and estate sampling enables observation of any unusual occurrence or build-up to be noted and acted on where appropriate.

An annual monitoring program provides a strategic approach to damaging insect management. Invasive species are also identified. Regular population sampling is undertaken in the most prone areas of the estate with control measures including aerial spraying when insect populations reach 'trigger' points. Animal browsing is usually an establishment issue and is addressed by maintaining plant vigour and quality of site preparation and establishment for rapid release. Where a problem persists, seedling protection and/or professional shooting is undertaken to reduce browsing pressure.

All operations are conducted with controls to minimise damage to the environment.

Forest Health

Maintenance of forest health and vigour is a key objective in managing the plantation estate for optimum wood flows. Routine coupe inspection and an annual assessment identify and report on any identified issues.

Appropriate control measures are strategically implemented when there is a threat to the estate and/or a legislative requirement. Control measures may include ground-based spraying of weeds, aerial spraying of damaging insects, thinning and fertilising to improve stand vigour and professional shooting to reduce browsing pressure.

Insect damage and damaging insect/predator population monitoring are conducted throughout the high-risk months, normally Nov-Feb. Intervention, usually aerial spraying by helicopter is undertaken when populations reach thresholds. Aerial application of chemicals is strictly controlled, requiring neighbour notification, and accurate records being kept including chemical use, crop type, location, flight paths and wind speed and direction. If possible, a cooperative approach to aerial spraying is undertaken with neighbouring plantation owners.



Other pathogens

Phytophthora cinnamomi

Phytophthora cinnamomi (Pc) often called root rot fungus is an introduced pathogen that attacks the roots of at least 130 Tasmanian species. If infected sites are disturbed, are poorly managed or machines carry spores, the pathogen can have a significant impact on biodiversity. While Pc can affect the native vegetation within the plantation estate, RFF remains vigilant and operates within the guidelines established by the FPA. The FPA Flora Technical Note No 8 provides a comprehensive understanding and approach to minimizing the spread and effect of Pc. It identifies areas of high risk where the *Phytophthora* hygiene measures must be implemented.

Standard hygiene measures for machinery washdown are implemented across RFF operations.

Myrtle Rust

Myrtle rust *Puccinia psidii* is a more recently identified introduced pathogen of the *Myrtaceae* family. It is considered the most significant and serious threat to our biodiversity and commercial forest industry. It has been detected in several states including Tasmania but at this stage appears limited to

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nursery stock. RFF field staff and forest managers are familiar with the bright yellow pustules that form on the soft growing tips of *Myrtaceae* leaves, stems and buds. Biosecurity Tasmania will be notified if myrtle rust is observed in the RFF estate.

Machinery hygiene

To ensure that weeds and diseases are not translocated throughout the DFA by machinery, RFF has strict machinery hygiene procedures on its operational plans and relevant specifications. Machinery is checked by the forest manager prior to the commencement of any new operation on the RFF estate. The Tasmanian Washdown Guidelines for Weed and Disease Control establish a standard for washdown. A washdown site is chosen ensuring run-off will not enter any watercourse or water body. The guidelines provide checklists for ensuring a thorough washdown is achieved. Washdown is to be identified on the Coupe Start-up Checklist.

Introduced genetics – Wildling Management

Genetic pollution can be an issue that has long term biodiversity impacts. Eucalypt plantations of *E. nitens* and *E. globulus* have the potential to hybridise with endemic eucalypts from the subgenus *Symphyomyrtus*. Perhaps the most common possibility is hybridisation between planted *E. nitens* and endemic *E. ovata*. The FPA has produced a comprehensive guide, Flora Technical Note 12 which covers the risk assessment process and other requirements when dealing with areas that may be susceptible to hybridisation.

Eucalypt Hybridisation

Monitoring of existing plantations adjacent to any susceptible native forest is undertaken and the presence of hybrid/unusual seedlings is reported to the FPA. Hand weeding is the usual method of control. However high-risk areas must be referred to the FPA when planning the re-establishment of plantations.

RFF has a small area of *Pinus radiata* plantation, there is no known gene mixing risk with endemic species however, pine wildlings can pose a problem. RFF staff monitor for wildlings in areas adjacent to pine plantations and take appropriate action if they are present.

Degraded Forest – Rehabilitation

Fire damaged forest will be assessed for the extent of the damage to determine the future management of the stand. Severely fire-damaged stands on productive sites will be re-established to the most suited species. Stands that have been lightly burnt may be grown on or scheduled for harvest. Extensive wildfire damage will require an estate analysis and possible rescheduling of wood flows. Assessment of the damage will be undertaken as soon as practical post the fire event.

Under the contractual arrangements, RFF (by agreement with STT) can hand back areas of the Forest Right estate that are degraded or not performing. This process is managed under the Forestry Right and the Handback of Unproductive Areas and DFA Handover procedures.

Chemical usage

RFF is committed to minimising chemical use across the estate and throughout all operations and seeks to use cost-effective alternatives where available. The use of chemicals is strictly controlled and bound by codes of practice. Chemicals are used for:

- Weed control;
- Fertiliser at planting (slow release);

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- Insect control

There has not been any use by RFF within the DFA, of any of the chemicals listed on the World Health Organisation banned chemicals register class 1a Extremely Hazardous Chemicals and class 1b Highly Hazardous Chemicals.

Social and Economic Benefits

As a plantation owner of a Tasmania wide estate RFF plays an important part in the Tasmanian economy. RFF employs over 170 people in the administration, forest management, establishment, harvest, cartage and processing areas. An employment multiplier of 2.2 generated by the EconSearch RISE model predicts more than 374 jobs generated by the RFF enterprise predominantly based around the DFA in Tasmania. The majority of our workforce comes from rural and regional areas representing smaller communities where the forest industry provides valuable employment. Our businesses support local procurement where possible.

Optimal Use

RFF seeks to optimise returns from its estate by maintaining plantation health and vigour and efficient harvest practices. Continual improvements are sought in establishment through site preparation and management practices and seedling quality. Efficiency in harvesting is achieved by minimising stump heights and matching the equipment to the terrain and product output.

Improvements in transport to market is an area of operations that is under review as long carts from one end of the island to the other are an issue. Rail capacity versus more efficient road transport configurations are all considered during harvest scheduling.

RFF owns and operates a woodchip processing facility at the deep-water port of Bell Bay. It markets wood products to international customers as chips and/or logs to provide the best returns. Marketing is dynamic and also relates to shipping efficiencies.

Monitoring & Auditing

RFF has a comprehensive approach to monitoring operations and ensuring compliance via a system of internal audits. External audits are provided by a third-party certification body and the FPA's annual compliance program. The Forest Practices Act requires that certified FPPs have Discrete Operational Phases identified and that compliance reports be completed within 30 days of the completion of each phase, with a final compliance report within 30 days of the expiry of an FPP.

Monitoring of operations provides feedback to contractors and RFF on multiple variables including safety, production and forest practices compliance. Monitoring is aided by the use of field tablets and appropriate software with reports feeding into monthly operations meetings. The annual internal audit is a sample across all activities and informs the annual Management Review.

Non-conformances found are actioned appropriately to their severity. The review of monitoring and conformance aids the development of training and improvements in procedures, planning and implementation.

Skills development

RFF is committed to maintaining a high level of professionalism across its workforce. This is achieved for employees and contractors by providing training opportunities for staff to work competently based on, and accredited to, nationally recognised competency standards. RFF also supports equal

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employment opportunities and identifies and implements actions to support the employment and skills development of its workers. RFF employs foresters who have attained or have the ability to attain FPO accreditation. Foresters are supported in their training through the continuum of courses offered by the FPA and other training providers.

Health and Safety

RFF is committed to providing an environment without risk to the health, safety, and wellbeing of all its employees, contractors, customers, and visitors.

The Forest Safety Code (Tasmania) (the Code) provides practical guidance on how to manage risks in the Tasmanian forest industry. The code has been preserved as an approved code of practice under the Work Health and Safety Act 2012.

Ensuring health and safety in forestry operations requires everyone to play their part in eliminating or reducing risks so far as is reasonably practicable. These responsibilities or 'duties' (the term used in the WHS Act) are related to the role the person has in the forestry production cycle.

A Site Safety Plan (SSP) is prepared for all operations before commencement by RFF. The SSP is then incorporated into the Forest Operations Safety Plan (FOSP) managed by the contractor. RFF conducts regular audits of operations that include a safety review. Newly identified hazards and risks must be reviewed, control methods established, communicated and then included into an updated SSP and FOSP

Access and Security

The broad dispersed nature of the RFF estate and irregular boundaries with multiple neighbours per property makes controlling security through locked gates impractical. There are occasions when active operations and high value, vulnerable assets will have access limited with locked boom gates when staff or contractors are not present.

RFF works together with STT and the forest industry to maintain a vigilant watch over illegal activity in the forest. Any suspicious or illegal activity observed by our staff or contractors is recorded and reported to the appropriate authority.

Understanding Stakeholders

Stakeholder needs and expectations

RFF is committed to a positive stakeholder engagement process. Affected stakeholders, including neighbours, local government and other forest industry stakeholders are regularly engaged through the operational process and notified through the FPA "Notice of Intent" requirement. Forest management staff proactively engage with stakeholders to build trust and productive relationships.

Communication with stakeholders is undertaken through the initial plan development and review, planning and the various stages of operational activity.

Reliance Forest Fibre is committed to engaging with stakeholders in the most appropriate way we can find. Stakeholders have been mapped against 12 interest groups. Each of these groups will be impacted by different activities in the forest.

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Stakeholder	Needs and expectations
State & Local Government & Regulatory Bodies	Understand where operations impact government regulations and infrastructure.
Non-Government Environmental Group	Advise of general policies and approaches to meeting certification standards.
Community Forest User Group	Advise of individual operations which could impact their forest use.
Contractors & Suppliers	Advise of safety requirements and risks
Regional & Local Tourism Associations	Advise of operations which could impact scheduled events.
Accreditation Bodies	Understand changes to the group members and DFA
Customers	Advise of standards being adhered to and provide appropriate information on sales documentation.
Industry	Advise of general policies and approaches to meeting certification standards.
Indigenous Groups	Ongoing liaison about all identified sites within the DFA and all operations in the impacted forests.
Neighbours & Locals impacted by forest operations	Advise of individual operations which could impact the environment or the amenity of their residence
Media	Advise of events which could interest the general public
Education and research	Work with institutions to enable research to happen and understand and value research.

Understanding these differences makes stakeholder engagement more effective. For example:

- Neighbours will always need to be advised of operations such as harvest and burning in a forest. This group of neighbours will be different for each forest.
- The relevant Council will need to be advised of harvest plans to ensure haulage routes are agreed.

This mapping creates a list of stakeholder engagements which can be considered compliance obligations. The mapped needs and expectations have been added to the Stakeholder Register.

RFF will continue to proactively engage with individuals and groups of stakeholders whenever it is required. All stakeholders will be engaged when the Forest Management plan is reviewed and updated.

RFF value all interactions with stakeholders and understand the value which may arise from positive contributions.

Dispute resolution

A dispute resolution protocol has been developed to provide a clear pathway to bring complaints and potential disputes to an agreeable solution where possible. In the absence of a solution and the parties remaining aggrieved, there is further due process available through, facilitation, mediation or arbitration as to provide an independent result binding on both parties.

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