



# Baradine Sawmilling Co. Pty Ltd.

Kenebri Road, BARADINE.  
A.B.N. 30 062 369 975

P.O. Box 143, GUNNEDAH, 2380  
Ph (02) 6742 0403  
Fax (02) 6742 2089

## SUBMISSION REGIONAL FOREST ASSESSMENT SOUTH-WESTERN CYPRESS STATE FORESTS

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The Baradine Sawmill was acquired by the Paul family in 1994. It has a current wood supply agreement with the NSW Government ending in 2025 in the amount of 20,000m<sup>3</sup> per annum. The company has a staff of 17, plus 8 contractors providing logging and cartage operations. The company was the recipient of financial assistance under the BTIDDAF programme enabling the following capital works to be carried out.

1. Installation of an automatic sawbench to assist in processing smaller size logs.
2. Facilities and equipment to carry out all saw sharpening operations resulting in the employment of an apprentice. This procedure was previously outsourced to a Sydney firm.
3. Replaced the existing unreliable water supply.

During the current financial year Baradine Sawmill has extracted to date 4,000m<sup>3</sup> from the Gulargambone State Forest. A commercial thinning operation is currently being undertaken in Gilwarney State Forest (Gilgandra) with an estimated cut of 500m<sup>3</sup>. All other logging operations were conducted in the Pilliga.

Approximately 40% of Baradine production is exported with Chain of Custody Certification. That is that the timber must only have been extracted from certified sustainable forests. It is noted that Crown Leases and Western Land Leases do not satisfy that requirement. We have knowledge of logs sourced from Western Land leases and confirm that they are of a quality unacceptable for the Sydney/Melbourne flooring market and would certainly not be of export quality.

We understand that the result of the Inventory Assessment using Lidar technology indicates a sustainable supply based on a 150 year forecast, approximates to the log allocations of the 4 existing log supply agreements in NSW (Quirindi, Gunnedah, Baradine and Grants Sawmills).

The Gunnedah Forestry area will probably come under stress from the coal industry with Leard Forest unlikely to supply little if any millable timber in the future due to mining operations, while Doona State Forest (one of two of the fastest growing Cypress Forests

in NSW) is central to proposed major mining operations by BHP Billiton. Any future shortfall in log supply to the Gunnedah mill from these above mentioned forests can only be sourced from the Pilliga Forest. A potential reduction of access to the Gilgandra/Gulargambone State Forest that may result from the current regional forest assessment will only lead to an even heavier demand on the Pilliga, resulting in unsustainability of the whole resource.

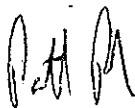
Questions have been raised on the viability of Western Forestry. We believe that a comparison with the operations of National Parks and Community Conservation Areas in the Western Division would prove that not only are State Forests better managed but on a cost per hectare basis would be considerably cheaper than that existing with National Parks and Community Conservation Areas.

Cypress requires a strict policy of thinning in order to maintain and increase growth. This is partly carried out by Forestry (25/30 year non commercial thinning) and by sawmills operating in accordance with the wood supply agreements (65 year commercial cut). Without such management the cypress forest will lock up presenting an impenetrable mass of thin stems three to four metres high with no ground cover, an ideal combination for potential soil erosion, and certainly not a habitat for birds or native animals. The National Parks and Community Conservation Areas have no policy of regular thinning and seem to rely on Hazard Reduction Burning as its management tool.

Mention has been made of the large number of forests, the subject of this regional forest assessment. We suggest you consider the numerous National Parks and Conservation Areas scattered over the Brigalow Belt South Bio Region and how difficult and costly it must be to manage so many areas covering the whole North West of NSW.

In 2005 it was suggested that Mr. Carr could secure his 348,000 hectares of new Conservation Areas without endangering the continued operation of all the then existing sawmills. Unfortunately commonsense was not a consideration and all demands of the conservation lobby were accepted by the Government of the day at a cost of \$80M..

One would hope that the doctrine of compromise as recently enunciated by the Tasmanian Leader of the Greens Party might extend to the present enquiry so that the existing Sawmilling Industry reliant on the South-Western Cypress State Forests represented by the Narrandera, Condoblin and Baradine Mills might continue to exist. This might be achieved by considering only dedicating non cypress forest areas for future conservation areas.



Patrick Paul  
Director.