



Redgum Timber Producers (Australia) Pty. Ltd.

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Arbuthnot Sawmills Pty Ltd The Bonum Sawmills Pty Ltd Gulpa Sawmill Pty Ltd
Merbein Sawmills Pty Ltd O'Brien Redgum Sawmills Pty Ltd

- Member of Forest Products Association, NSW
- Member of the Victorian Association of Forest Industries

26th August 2009

Forests Assessment
Natural Resources Commission
GPO Box 4206
Sydney NSW 2001

Dear Commission Members

Subject: Redgum Forest Assessment

Redgum Timber Producers (Australia) Pty Ltd, (*herein referred to as RTP*), was formed in April 2002 and is essentially a timber marketing company that is jointly owned by five of the major sawmills in the redgum industry. These sawmills are:- Arbuthnot Sawmills Pty Ltd, The Bonum Sawmills Pty Ltd, Gulpa Sawmill Pty Ltd, Merbein Sawmills Pty Ltd and O'Brien Redgum Sawmills Pty Ltd.

While each sawmill still maintains their autonomy and services their own traditional customer base, RTP's main focus is on the supply of Redgum heavy structural products to railway networks throughout Australia and the development of other domestic and international markets.

My observation of the industry from a commercial point of view, is that River Redgum products are still in high demand both domestically and internationally. These products include, but are not limited to furniture, veneer, flooring, fence posts, railway platform coping timbers, railway bridge timbers, railway crossing timbers, railway sleepers, garden grade timbers, retaining walls, wood chips and sawdust.

River Redgum is still the preferred option for many applications due to its timber properties and characteristics, economical competitiveness and environmental friendliness when compared to other options such as steel, concrete, or other uncontrolled timber species sourced from other countries.

The Redgum industry employs more than 500 people and generates sales in excess of \$70 million per annum.

The Redgum forests are, (and for many years have been) managed in a sustainable manner by Forests NSW in accordance with National and International Standards such as AFS (Australian Forestry Standard), RAMSAR and ISO 14001.

We would like this assessment to be based on facts that can be substantiated, rather than on emotive statements that are often proven to be incorrect, misleading and at times highly emotive.

In particular, we would like the Terms of Reference to address the following:-

- Security of access to the timber resource by way of providing long term timber licences to sawmills.
- The condition (and total area) of currently listed Redgum Timber National Parks and acceptance that the "lock up" concept does not produce the best results for the forest, environment, industry or the local communities when compared to areas that have active forest management.
- The opportunity to harvest and utilise dead or dying trees.
- Water Management. The health of Redgum forests will be increasingly dependant on water management. Failure to provide an adequate water management strategy will further reduce forest health, and have the potential to see more forest degradation and tree deaths, as is well evidenced in significant red gum forest reserves in both New South Wales and Victoria.

RTP would like to see the redgum timber industry recognised as being part of an active, multi-use forest management group that produces the best outcome for the forests, the environment, industry and regional communities.

We welcome your assessment to determine practical conservation outcomes and provide a sustainable healthy future for the forest, the forest industry and local communities and look forward to participating in the assessment process.

Yours Sincerely,



Ron Sharples
Managing Director
Redgum Timber Producers (Australia) Pty Ltd

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