



The Hon. John Barilaro MP
Deputy Premier
Minister for Regional New South Wales
Minister for Industry and Trade

Ref: 20/34#74

Dr Bronte Somerset
Secretary
South East Region Conservation Alliance Inc.
PO Box 724
NAROOMA NSW 2546

Dear Dr Somerset

I refer to your letter of 27 July 2020 to the Hon Gladys Berejiklian MP, Premier, concerning the future of the forestry sector. The Premier has referred your correspondence to me for response as the matter falls within my portfolio responsibilities.

I note your concern about the health of the forestry industry in NSW. As a result of recent events such as the prolonged drought, an unprecedented bushfire season and the COVID-19 pandemic, these have certainly been challenging times for many industries, and regional areas have been particularly hard hit.

I would like to bring to your attention that the forestry sector in NSW is worth around \$2.5 billion. Furthermore, the industry supports more than 22,000 jobs with over 40% of these located in regional areas. I cannot stress enough the importance of this valuable sector to rural and regional communities.

Following this unprecedented bushfire season, our well-managed, sustainable timber harvesting operations are providing the essential renewable building products our communities need to rebuild. Timber from NSW creates in-demand essential products such as power poles, timber bridges and house frames. By ensuring an ongoing wood supply, we will help maintain local jobs when they are most needed and meet the critical timber supply needed to rebuild our local communities.

Please be assured that regional employment, in all its forms, remains a priority for the NSW Government, and the forestry sector will continue to be an important part of that mix.

Thank you for bringing this matter to the Government's attention.

Yours sincerely


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16 SEP 2020