



John Barilaro

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MEDIA RELEASE

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NSW GOVERNMENT WILL NOT PROCEED WITH LEASE OF COMMERCIAL SOFTWOOD PLANTATION BUSINESS

The NSW Government will not progress with the long-term lease of Forestry Corporation's softwood plantation business following the conclusion of an independent scoping study.

The decision was made after a five-month investigation which took into account the recent damage to the State's forestry assets during the unprecedented bushfire season.

Deputy Premier and Minister responsible for Forestry and Disaster Recovery John Barilaro said Forestry Corporation was focused on harvesting timber damaged during the fires, and would soon embark on a massive re-planting program.

"When I took on the role as Minister responsible for Forestry, I was always determined to grow the harvestable forestry estate across NSW, and these fires have only strengthened my resolve to increase timber supplies and create more jobs and opportunities in the sector right across our State," Mr Barilaro said.

"Our priority now is to assist Forestry Corp and the entire forestry industry get back on its feet after the fires.

"Re-growing our forests, getting new trees in the ground, and strengthening the industry so its long-term future is secure is where we are focusing our energy."

NSW Treasurer Dominic Perrottet said the scoping study made a thorough investigation of all options available to the Government.

"The significant damage to the sector caused by the recent bushfires was obviously a key factor in the decision made by the NSW Government," Mr Perrottet said.

"We are committed to ensuring the forestry industry recovers from the fires and the thousands of people who are employed in the sector have a strong and secure future."

Approximately 25 per cent of Forestry Corporation's softwood division suffered some degree of fire damage over summer.

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