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AFPA supports application for road upgrades in Southern NSW forest hub

The Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) supports the push by the Softwood Working Group (SWG), as well as the Snowy Valleys, Greater Hume and Cootamundra-Gundagai Councils, for road upgrades in the key forestry hub that is the South-West Slopes region, that will ensure appropriate future transport links for forest industries, Chief Executive Officer of AFPA, Mr Ross Hampton said today.

The SWG recently received approval to proceed to Stage 2 of its application under the NSW Growing Local Economies program to apply for \$20 million in funding to upgrade local roads prioritised by the SWG 2015 Road Haulage Study.

“The roads identified in the Road Haulage Study are critical to the timber industry in the region,” Mr Hampton said: The roads include:

- Bombowlee Creek Road and the Taradale/Broadleaf Park Complex within Snowy Valleys Council.
- Coppabella Road within Greater Hume Shire.
- Northern Road complex (Nanangroe, Adjungbilly, and Redhill Roads) within Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council.

“The SWG has identified that these roads provide for the cartage of 50 per cent of all the logs produced in the region. It’s also important to recognise that wood supply is tight in the region and the continuity of wood flow is crucial,” Mr Hampton said.

“The 2017 Industry Impact Study, completed on behalf of SWG and Forest and Wood Products Australia (FWPA), demonstrated the importance of the softwood plantation-based industry for the continued social and economic wellbeing of the South-West Slopes region. The industry supports the employment of more than 50 per cent of the workforce in the Snowy Valleys Council and contributes more than \$2 billion to the gross value of regional output.

“It’s essential that infrastructure upgrades like key forest roads are a focus of governments. AFPA supports the SWG and Councils in the South-West Slopes region in their pursuit of road upgrades, particularly given the importance of the region as a forestry hub,” Mr Hampton concluded.

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AFPA represents forest growers, harvesters, and manufacturers of timber and paper products.

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