Australian Forest Products Association

Media Release

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Forest industries welcome Nats 'push for the bush'

Australia's forest industries welcome the Federal Nationals' push to grow jobs and population in regional Australia, where our industries can play a key role driving regional employment and growth, Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA), Ross Hampton said today.

Today, Federal Regionalisation Minister Senator Bridget McKenzie will argue in a speech at the Regions Rising event in Wodonga, that Governments must make it easier for people to live and work in the bush, and push to boost the population of key regional centres.

"The full supply chain of Australia's forest industries, from tree growing to sawmilling and pulp and paper production already underpin local economies across a significant number of regional centres. With the right government policies, forest industries can contribute so much more," Mr Hampton said.

Nationally, a number of regional centres and towns are already highly reliant on forest industries and could benefit from the Nats 'push to the bush'. They include, but aren't limited to:

- Oberon (NSW)
- Tumbarumba (NSW)
- Tumut (NSW)
- Bombala (NSW)
- Eden (NSW)
- Grafton (NSW)
- Coffs Harbour (NSW)
- Myrtleford (VIC)
- Traralgon (VIC)
- Colac (VIC)
- Morwell (VIC)
- Benalla (VIC)
- Tarpeena (SA)
- Nangwarry (SA)
- Mount Gambier (SA)
- Millicent (SA)
- Gympie (QLD)

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- Maryborough (QLD)
- Bunbury (WA)
- Nannup (WA)
- Pemberton (WA)
- Manjimup (WA)
- Burnie (TAS)
- Devonport (TAS)
- Smithton (TAS)
- New Norfolk (TAS)
- Launceston (TAS)

“The demand for timber and fibre will rapidly increase in Australia and internationally over the coming decades and we already have a shortage of products like timber framing to build new homes and timber pallets to move our food into supermarkets. It’s critical our industries grow to meet the market. It makes sense that forest industries are part of the Nationals’ welcome policy for regional expansion,” Mr Hampton concluded.

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