

New Private Native Forestry Codes of Practice

The NSW Government will commence new PNF Codes of Practice. This fact sheet outlines the key changes for landholders and contractors.

New PNF Codes

As part of the Private Native Forestry Review, the NSW Government will commence new Private Native Forestry Codes of Practice (PNF Codes) on 2 May 2022. The new PNF Codes set the environmental protections and operating standards for landholders to help them manage their farm forests for environmental, social and economic values.

New PNF Codes will apply to:

- Northern NSW
- Southern NSW
- River Red Gum Forests
- Cypress & Western Hardwood Forests

The new PNF Codes will be published on the NSW Legislation Website. Links to the new PNF Codes will be made available at www.lls.nsw.gov.au/pnforestry.

Key features of the new PNF Codes

The new PNF Codes have been developed to ensure the long-term ecological sustainability of PNF in NSW. The key changes in the new PNF Codes are explained below.

Planning and Assessment

Forest Management Plans

The process for planning forestry operations has been reviewed to ensure planning guides forest management in line with the new PNF Codes, and to outline the role of Local Land Services in supporting forest management.

Forest Management Plans are used in the same way as the previous Forest Operation Plans, and guide planning in line with the PNF Codes. However, under the new PNF Codes a landholder, or a person nominated by the landholder such as a contractor, will prepare a Forest Management Plan and send it to Local Land Services for approval before forestry operations commence. Local Land Services will review the Forest Management Plan to ensure it uses the correct form and is consistent with the PNF Code before approving the Forest Management Plan.

Small scale harvesting

The PNF Codes introduce small scale harvesting to improve voluntary compliance and engagement with the PNF framework. Small scale harvesting is consistent with Recommendation 7 of the Independent Biodiversity Legislation Review Panel Report, which called for regulating sustainable forestry operations based on their scale and intensity rather than tenure, including options for low-intensity operations.

Under this part of the PNF Codes, landholders will still be required to obtain an approved PNF Plan, submit pre-harvest and post-harvest notifications, and adhere to the operating standards in the PNF Code, however a Forest Management Plan is not required.

Enhanced Reporting Requirements

The PNF Codes improve transparency and accountability by replacing annual reporting with a pre-harvest and post-harvest notification system, with reports required to be sent to Local Land Services within 30 days of commencing and finishing forestry operations. This will facilitate the timely transfer of information and will enable better engagement and advice for landholders about their forests and forest management.

Silviculture

Single tree selection (STS), thinning and Australian group selection (AGS) have been simplified to enable clearer interpretations of the PNF Codes while allowing landholders to deliver better forest management and environmental outcomes.

The multiple basal areas for single tree selection and thinning have been replaced with one basal area limit that applies regardless of stand height. AGS now includes a clear area limit, with guidance on placement around important landscape and habitat features.

Strengthened regeneration monitoring and management requirements have been included by requiring forest regeneration is monitored at 2, 6 and 10 years to track progress and ensure unsuccessful regeneration can be addressed with management actions if necessary.

Pest, weed and fire management

The new PNF Codes make it clear that landholders are permitted to manage fire, pests and weeds within a PNF Plan area so long as any activities are carried out in accordance with all applicable legal requirements and necessary approvals.

For pests and weeds, management must be consistent with the *Biosecurity Act, 2015*. Fire management must be undertaken in line with the *Rural Fires Act, 1997*.

Environmental protections and threatened species

The PNF Codes have a range of inbuilt environmental protections. These include minimum basal area retention requirements, protection of key landscape and habitat features, strict standards for forestry infrastructure to protect the landscape and waterways, and threatened species protections.

Protection of old growth forest and rainforest

The Government's long-standing commitment to the protection of old growth forests and rainforests in NSW has not changed. The PNF Codes maintain the important protections for old growth and rainforest on private land that were in the previous PNF Codes and have been in place since 2007. As with the previous Codes, no forestry operations can occur in Old Growth Forests or Rainforests.

Riparian protections

The new PNF Codes enhance stream protections by replacing the existing buffer on buffer arrangement with a simple but expanded riparian exclusion zone that applies to mapped drainage features, unmapped drainage lines and streams.

Threatened species

Appendix A: Listed Species Ecological Prescriptions has been updated with additional flora and fauna species. This includes species such as the Greater Glider, Gang-Gang Cockatoo and Pale Yellow Doubletail Orchid.

In line with the NSW Government's commitment to include robust protections for koalas in high value habitat while providing certainty and consistency for landholders, koala protections have been updated in the new PNF Codes. The new protections in Appendix A provide additional protections in areas of high value koala habitat such as increased tree retention requirements, exclusion zones around trees used by koalas, and an updated primary and secondary koala feed tree list.

The new PNF Codes maintain the existing exclusion of forestry operations in areas of core koala habitat.

Monitoring, evaluation and reporting

The PNF Codes provide for a monitoring program to be developed for the private native forest estate as part of the NSW Forest Monitoring and Improvement Program. Development of the monitoring will be led by the Natural Resources Commission, in collaboration with Local Land Services and the NSW Environment Protection Authority.

Additional information

More information on private native forestry in NSW can be found on the Local Land Services website www.lls.nsw.gov.au/pnforestry, or by contacting your nearest Private Native Forestry Officer (<https://www.lls.nsw.gov.au/help-and-advice/private-native-forestry/private-native-forestry-officer-contacts>).

We're here to help

Find us online: lls.nsw.gov.au

Call us: 1300 795 299 and ask for an officer to advise you on Private Native Forestry

Email us: pnf.info@nsw.gov.au

See us: drop into your nearest Local Land Services office

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