

**Australian Forestry Management Pty Limited  
(AFM)**

**2004 Softwood Project**



**2013-2014 Annual Report**

## **Legal Context**

This annual report has been prepared in accordance with Schedule 1 Part 3(h) of the Forestry Management Contract between Australian Forestry Management Pty Limited and the Forestry Commission of New South Wales (now known as the Forestry Corporation of NSW) for the 2004 Softwood Project.

## **Overview**

The plantations at Dr Vance and The Valley are in good condition and are generally performing well.

Rainfall has been average during the reporting period, with significant dry period during summer and above average rainfall in autumn. Total rainfall at Tumbarumba from July 13 to June 14 was 997 mm compared to the long term average of 979 mm, and rainfall for Yass (Browning) being approximately 595mm, compared to a long term average of 663mm.

## **Stand Condition**

### *Dr Vance*

The Dr Vance plantation continues to perform well, with trees displaying superior growth and form (refer photo below).



**Figure 1: Dr Vance (2005 Age Class) July 2014 – good growth and healthy trees**

### *The Valley*

As previously reported, The Valley plantation continues to maintain good growth over the majority of the plantation and above average performance where stocking is adequate and particularly on lower and mid slope sites.



The seedlings planted in 2012, in the area burnt by wildfire in 2010, have generally established successfully, excluding localised areas where there is significant surface rock. No additional treatments are recommended for this area.



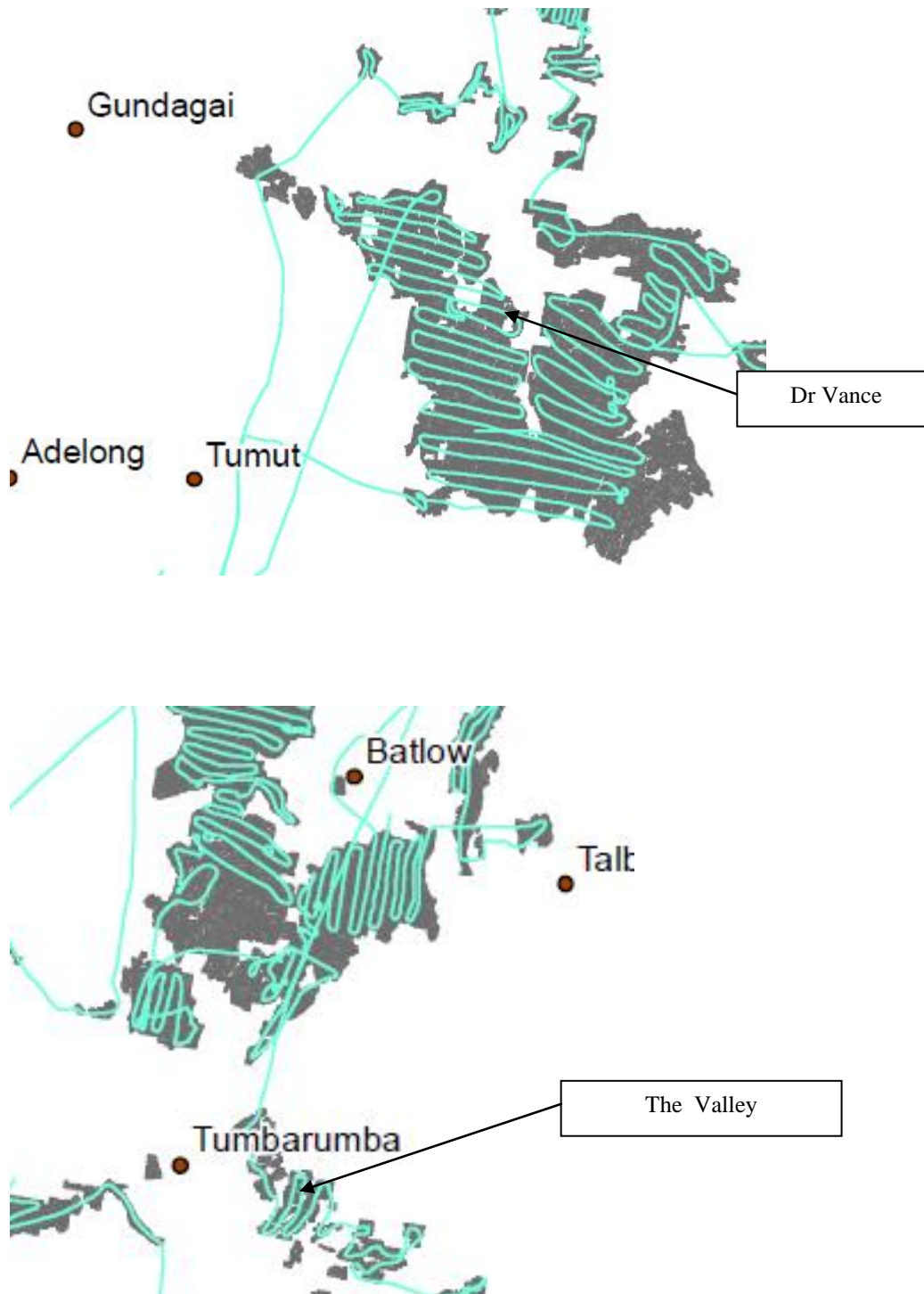
**Figure 2: The Valley (2005 Age Class) – well stocked & good growth**



**Figure 3: The Valley 2012 seedlings planted in 2010 fire area**

## **Biosecurity & Forest Health**

Aerial forest health surveillance was undertaken in Winter 2013. No significant issues were identified and no areas of pest damage were noted.



**Figure 4: Tumut management area forest health aerial surveillance flight paths – winter 2013.**

Dothistroma needle blight is present in The Valley in low levels, similar to other plantation areas in the region, however infection levels are significantly lower following seasonally dry

conditions during spring and summer. Treatment of Dothistroma is not recommended for the low level of infection currently observed.

### **Operational Activities**

Grazing of cattle has continued in part of The Valley to minimise grass fuels and associated bush fire hazard.

Fire trail and road maintenance and noxious weed control has also been undertaken, with a significant blackberry spraying program to maintain fire fighting access on plantation roads and tracks completed during 2014.

### **Fire Incidents**

There were no fire incidents within or in close proximity to the 2004 Softwood Project plantations.

### **Other Management Issues**

The residual effects of the significant replant program in the first three years of the plantation establishment has resulted in ongoing variation in tree size and stocking. Generally, growth in subsequent years has been significant, however it is anticipated that there may be some impact on the future productivity (timber yield) of these areas. The extent of this impact will be quantified in 2015 when age 10 inventory is undertaken.

There are some remaining areas of up to 10 hectares of 2005 AC plantation that is severely under stocked due to wet and swampy ground conditions and very heavy blackberry regrowth. These sites are not considered to be practical to replant as it is likely that poor survival of seedlings on these sites will preclude successful plantation establishment. These affected areas were originally reported in the 2008-09 report.

### **Planned Activities for 2014/2015**

- Aerial and ground forest health surveillance
- Grazing in suitable areas to reduce grass fire hazard
- Maintenance of tracks and access roads
- Age 10 inventory
- Fire risk reduction works and surveillance
- Identification and signage of plantation fire roads to comply with amendments to the Plantations and Reafforestation Code.

### **Report Prepared by**

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#### **Charlie Taylor**

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