

AgriWealth Pty Limited

2009 SOFTWOOD TIMBER PROJECT



2014-2015 Annual Report

Context

This annual report has been prepared in accordance with Schedule 1 Part 3(h) of the Forestry Management Contract between AgriWealth Pty Limited and the Forestry Commission of New South Wales (Forests NSW) for the 2009 Softwood Timber Project.

Background

The 2009 Softwood Timber Project is located at Wandalla, 40 kilometres south west of Oberon within the Bathurst management unit of Northern Softwoods region. The project comprises 50 hectares of plantation established in winter 2010. Being the second planting program at Wandalla the plantation is referred to as Stage 2.

2014-15 Growing Season

The Bathurst management unit was subject to another challenging growing season receiving below average rainfall (figure 1) and very much above average temperatures (figure 2). The effect of the drier conditions was offset by high rainfall events in December and April. Rainfall for Oberon (Springbank) was 764 mm compared to a long term average of 840 mm (refer Annexure A). In July 2015 heavy snow falls occurred on the Oberon plateau.

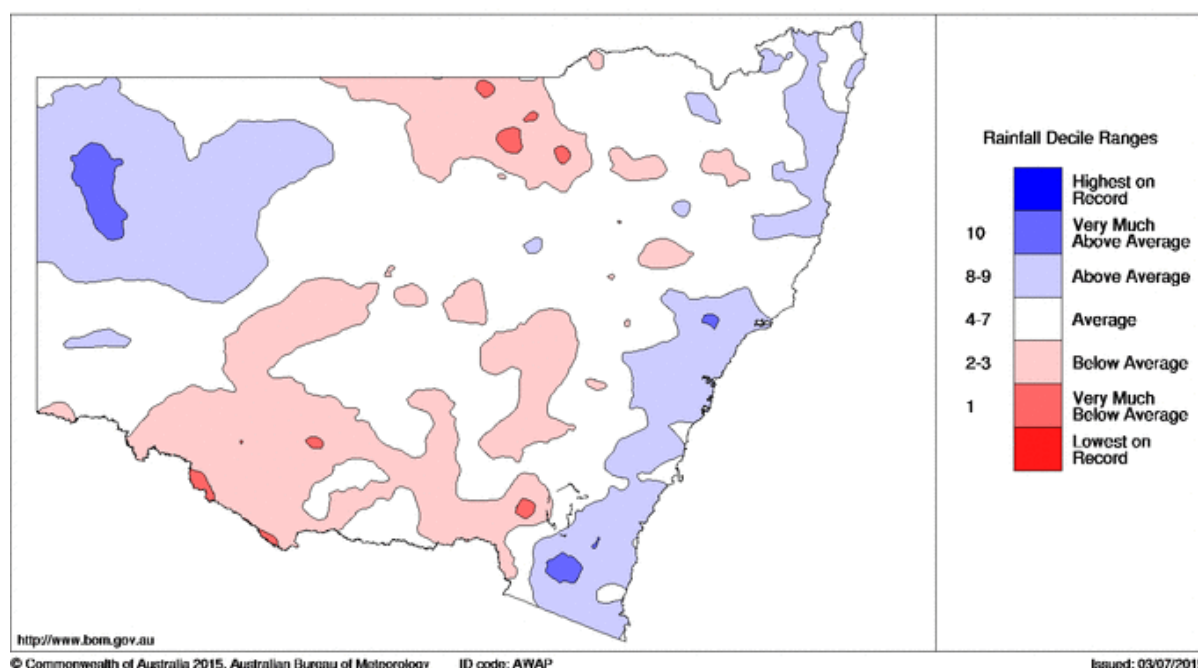


Figure 1 – New South Wales Rainfall Deciles – 2014-2015

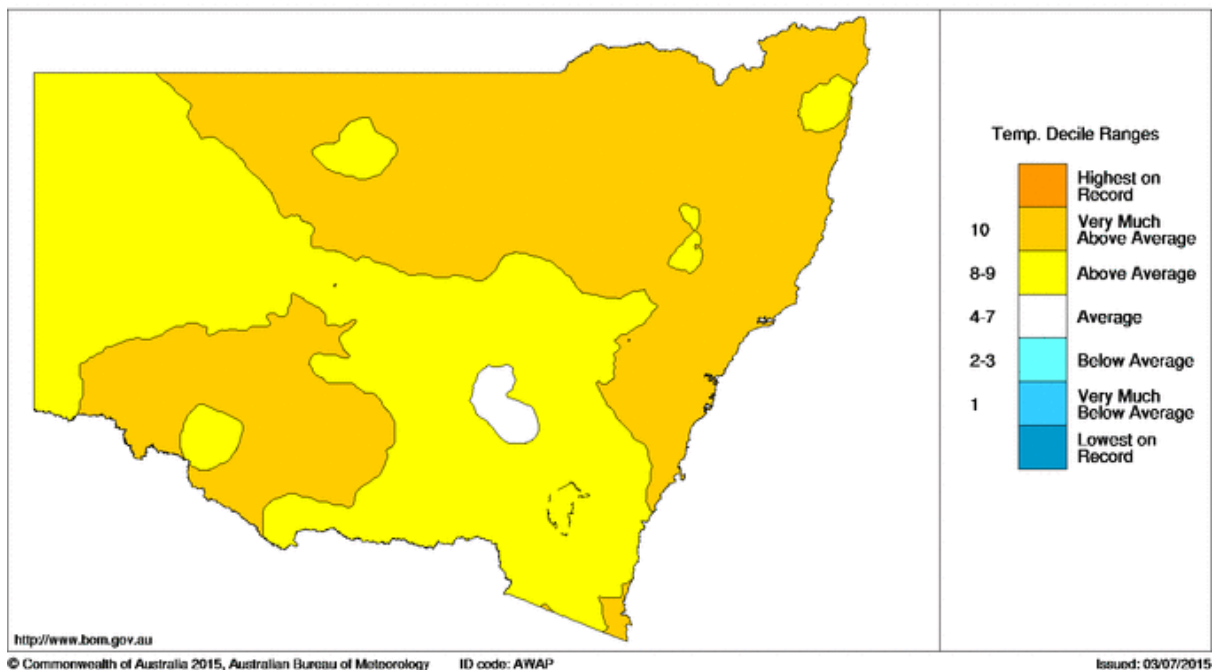


Figure 2 – New South Wales Temperature Deciles – 2014-2015

Stand Condition

The stand continues to exhibit excellent condition despite a very challenging growing season. It remains well stocked, healthy, vigorous and with reasonable form. Significant and potentially damaging snowfalls occurred during winter, however, when the age class was inspected in December 2014 and July 2015 there was no evidence that the crop had been impacted (figure 3).

Forest Health Surveys

The timing of this year's forest health survey was rescheduled to ensure that reports from NSW DPI Forest Health unit could be received in advance of AgriWealth's annual reporting deadline (forest health reports have traditionally been one year in arrears as they are received after the annual report submission date).

Forest health aerial surveillance and monitoring was undertaken in Winter 2015 (figure 4) and complemented with on ground inspections in July-August 2015. No significant issues were identified.



Figure 3: Wandalla Stage 2. Five year old trees – a healthy, uniform and vigorous crop (July 2015).

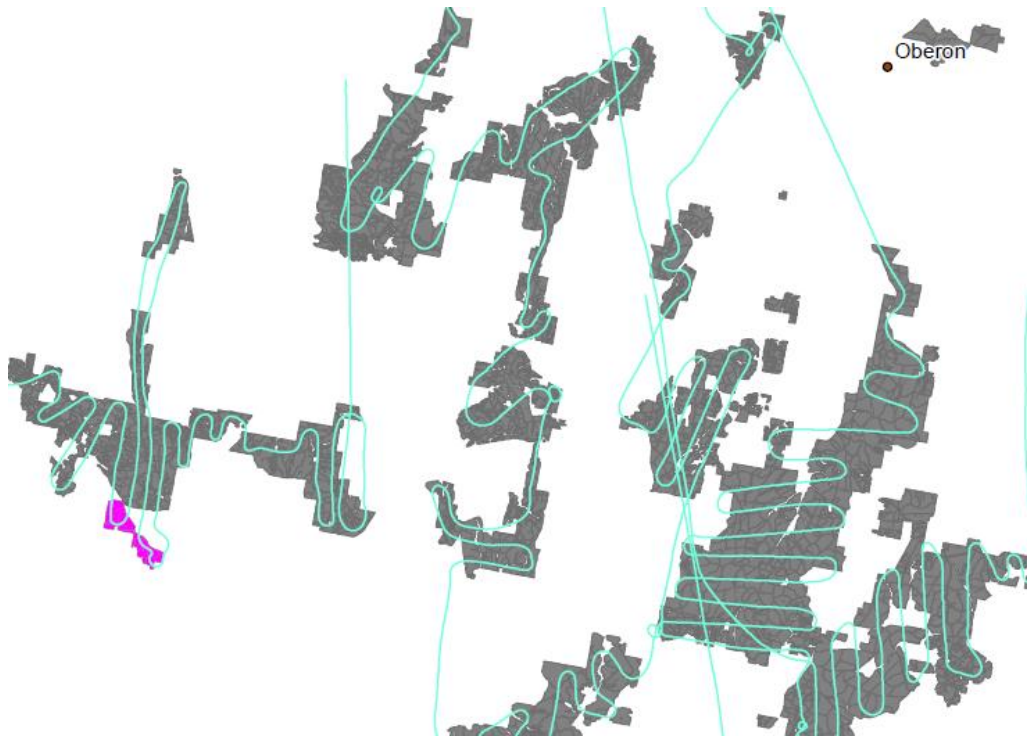


Figure 4: Forest health aerial surveillance flight path over Bathurst plantations – July 2015 (Wandalla highlighted in pink)

Biosecurity

In October 2014 Giant Pine Scale (*Marchalina hellenica*) was detected in suburban Melbourne and Adelaide. Giant Pine Scale is a scale insect that lives by sucking the sap of pine, fir and spruce trees. Trees impacted by large populations of giant pine scale suffer severe dehydration and dieback of branches, and can eventually die. Representatives from the Commonwealth, State and industry have agreed to a national eradication program which is currently underway in Melbourne and Adelaide. Each state jurisdiction has also agreed to undertake monitoring in amenity and production pine plantings. During this year's surveys no Giant Pine Scale was detected in AgriWealth plantations nor in the region.

Fire Incidents

No fire incidents have occurred within or close to any of the plantations.

The plantations were inspected in July 2015 to check for compliance to Forest Corporation NSW standards for fire preparedness and the Plantations and Re-forestation Act.

For the 2009 project there are two actions proposed:

1. Signage will be installed at the main entry point to the forest indicating the condition of the internal access tracks with respect to their use by Category 1 fire appliances.
2. Some track clearing and widening will be scheduled to improve vehicle access to a water point situated within the plantation. Figure 3 looks South from the general location of the water point and shows the track where clearing and widening is proposed.

The actions required are not of an urgent nature. The actions will be included on a prioritised schedule of fire preparedness tasks that Forest Corporation NSW needs to undertake across the Bathurst management area.

Other Management Issues

Nil.

Report Prepared by

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FOREST MODELLER

NORTHERN SOFTWOODS

Monthly Rainfall Statistics

