

Farm Forestry – Fact Sheet 3

Declaration of Forestry Area

On 1 July 2014, the Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation declared the Lower Limestone Coast Prescribed Wells Area to be a 'declared forestry area.

This means that the forest water licensing provisions in the *Water Allocation Plan for the Lower Limestone Coast Prescribed Wells Area* (the Plan), now come into effect.

All commercial forests are now required to be the subject of a forest water licence,, with a water allocation that offsets the impact of the plantation on the groundwater resource, unless the forest is classified as farm forestry.

The principles outlined below are based on the principles in the Plan.

What is a commercial forest?

The *Natural Resources Management Act 2004* defines 'commercial forest' to mean "a forest plantation where the forest vegetation is grown or maintained so that it can be harvested or used for commercial purposes (including through the commercial exploitation of the carbon absorption capacity of the forest vegetation)."

A commercial forest does not include plantings for shade and shelter for stock or crops, natural resources management including soil and water protection, habitat conservation, landscape and amenity values.

Does it include a farm forest?

Farm forestry is excluded from the forest water licensing requirements.

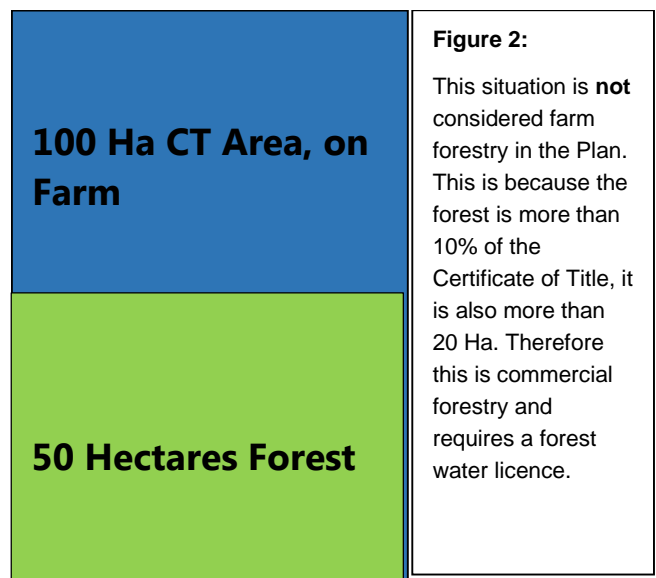
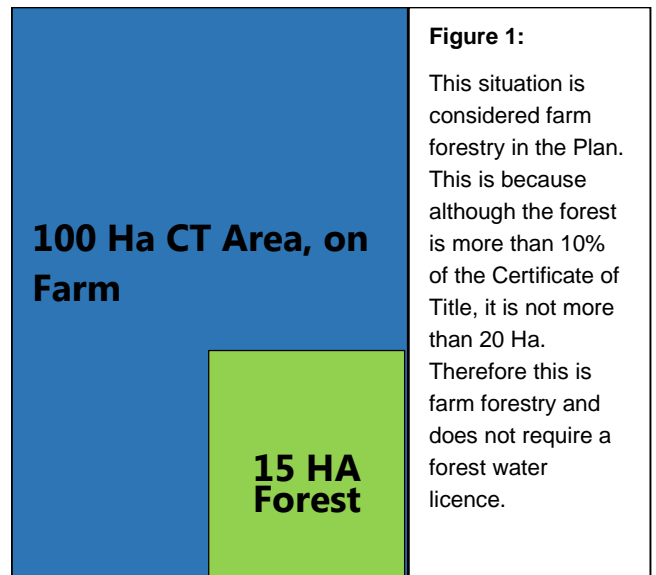
The Plan defines 'farm forestry' to mean a commercial forest that is situated on a farm and where the net planted area does not exceed:

- (i) 10% of the land described in a Certificate of Title or Crown Lease; or
- (ii) 20 hectares – whichever is greater.

In a practical sense, farm forestry is a forestry activity that is integrated with other farming activities, such as cropping or livestock production. Farm forestry can take many forms, including plantations on farms, woodlots, timber belts, alleys, wide spaced tree plantings and sustainably managed private native forests.

Figures 1 and 2 illustrate what is and isn't farm forestry.

Across the Lower Limestone Coast Prescribed Wells Area, farm forestry currently comprises approximately 6,950 hectares and therefore is not a major land use.



What happens if I expand my farm forest area at a later date?

If, after 1 July 2014, the area of a farm forest is expanded so that it no longer meets the definition of farm forestry, a forest water licence will be required to cover the total forest area. The forest manager will first need to obtain a water allocation for the expansion area from the water market and make an application for an allocation for the area of farm forest that was established prior to the 1 July 2014, from the Minister.

For Example:

You currently have 15 Hectares of forestry on a hundred hectare CT (example 1) and you wish to expand your forestry area to 50 hectares as in example 2. You will need to apply for the allocation for the original 15 hectares from the Minister and purchase the allocation required for the remaining 35 hectares.

What happens if I reduce my commercial forest area at a later date?

If you reduce your commercial forest area by clear felling and killing (if hardwood plantation), to an area that now falls within the definition of 'farm forestry' in the Plan, you may be able to transfer the water allocation attached to the forest water licence to the holder of another licence. This is subject to hydrological assessment and the Minister's approval.

If, after this reduction, you decide to expand your forest area again, so that it now meets the definition of a commercial forest (as above), you will need to purchase the entire allocation required to offset the impacts of the forest area, from the water market.

What happens if my Certificate of Title or Crown Lease is sub divided?

If you have a small plantation area that, at 1 July 2014, met the definition of farm forestry, (ie is less than 10% of the Certificate of Title (CT)).

You later subdivide the property such that there is now 2 or more CTs, and the area of forestry is now greater than 10% of the new CT. You are not required to do anything until such times as the forest is clear-felled.

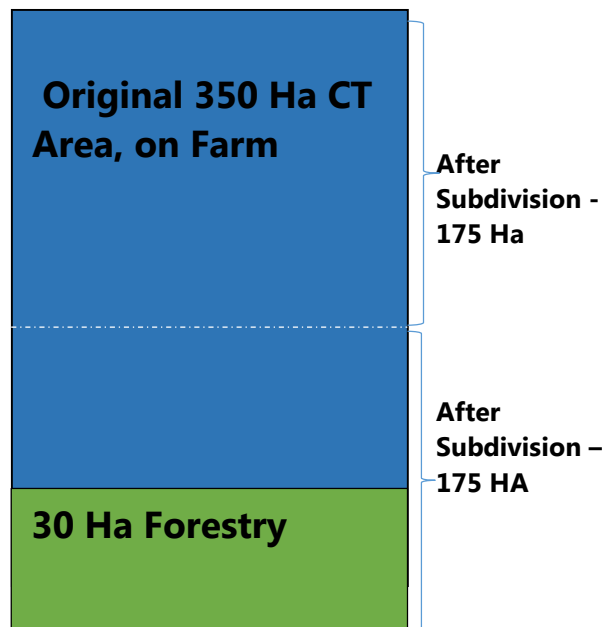
The forest owner at the time of replanting or coppicing, can only replant or coppice the area that is in less than 10% of the new Certificate of Title or 20 Ha (whichever is the greater), unless the entire area to be replanted is the subject of a

forest water licence. If the entire area was to be replanted, the forest manager would need to obtain a water allocation from the Minister if the trees were in existence at 1 July 2014 or from the market if the original trees are planted after 1 July 2014.

For example:

The area of the farm CT is 350 Hectares, with the area of forestry being 30 Hectares. This falls within the definition of farm forestry as it is less than 10% of the CT.

If the land is subdivided into 2 parcels (on 2 titles) of 175 hectares each, the 30 Ha forest will no longer fall within the definition of farm forestry as it exceeds 10% of the CT (17.5 hectares) and 20 Hectares. At replanting, the forest area must either be reduced to 20 hectares or the entire 30 hectares must be the subject of a forest water licence.



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Additional Fact Sheets and Copies of the Plan Are Available on SENRM Boards website

<http://www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au/southeast/water-and-coast/water-allocation-plans/permits-and-licences/forestry-water-licencing>



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