

Media Release

The Hon Ros Spence MP
Minister for Agriculture
Minister for Community Sport
Minister for Carers and Volunteers



Friday, May 10 2024

FORESTRY TRANSITION GRANT GROWING GIPPSLAND NURSERY

Ex-native timber workers are finding new work and opportunities in an expanding Gippsland nursery, thanks to a \$775,000 grant from the Allan Labor Government's Forestry Transition Fund.

Nationwide Trees at Piedmont in West Gippsland, will use the grant to construct a multi-use production and dispatch shed, helping the business to meet growing demand.

To support the business' growth, impacted forestry workers and their families are being recruited via the Victorian Forestry Worker Support Program and trained to work in the new facility – tripling the business' workforce. One former mill employee has already been employed in an administrative role.

Nationwide Trees has also employed ex-timber workers to do excavation work on the site in preparation for construction of the dispatch shed.

The wholesale nursery supplies a broad range of deciduous and broadleaf seedlings, rootstocks and some conifers to the nursery industry, orchardists, landscapers, local authorities, farm foresters, planting contractors and consultants.

The grant works alongside the Noojee Local Development Strategy (LDS) to help develop new local job opportunities and future community development.

The Noojee LDS has also received \$38,500 from the Forestry Transition Program's Community Development Fund to progress the town's strategy work including a feasibility study for a Forestry Therapy Centre.

The \$36 million Forestry Transition Fund supports job creation and business development in and around the native timber communities in Gippsland and the north-east of the state. For more information visit, vic.gov.au/forestry.

Quote attributable to Minister for Agriculture Ros Spence

"Nationwide Trees is just one example of the great projects that the Forestry Transition Fund is supporting following the end of native timber harvesting in Victoria."

Quote attributable to Member for Eastern Victoria Harriet Shing

"This funding is part of our work to create and deliver job opportunities for timber workers and support Gippsland's economy and community as our transition work continues."

Quote attributable to Managing Director Nationwide Trees Glenn Fenton

"This grant will greatly assist Nationwide Trees to expand its capacity and operations. We designed this project to maximise the use of local contractors and suppliers during the build and provide employment for former forestry workers and their families."