



The Tasmanian and Australian governments determine which areas of forest on public land should be managed primarily for conservation in national parks and nature reserves and which areas should be managed for multiple uses, including wood production.

Forest practices, in both public and private forests in Tasmania, are regulated through a system administered by the Forest Practices Authority (FPA)- an independent Tasmanian Government regulatory authority.

Forest practices include:

- harvesting and regenerating native forest
- harvesting and/or establishing plantations
- clearing forests for other purposes
- clearing and converting threatened native vegetation communities
- constructing roads and quarries for the above purposes
- harvesting tree ferns.



A mosaic of land uses. Photographer: Richard Bennett

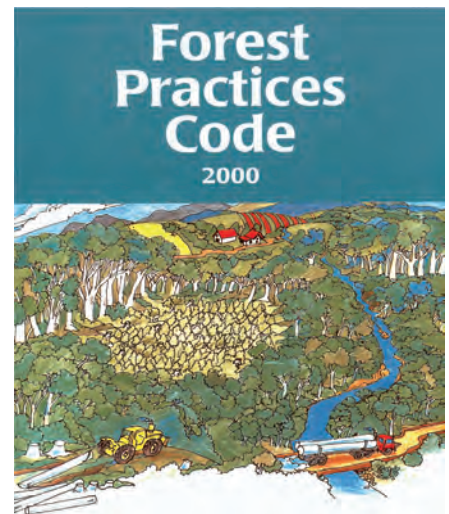
The forest practices system

The objective of the forest practices system is to achieve the sustainable management of public and private forest. The system is based upon a cooperative approach between the government, the forest industry, landowners and the broader community. Forest Practices Officers are trained and authorised by the FPA and employed within the industry to plan, supervise and monitor forest practices. FPA staff provide advice on regulatory and technical matters, including requirements for the protection of natural and cultural values. Independent monitoring, auditing and enforcement of forest practices are also undertaken by the FPA. The system is based on continuing improvement through ongoing research, training and education.

Forest Practices Code

The *Forest Practices Code* provides a set of guidelines and standards to ensure that forest practices are conducted in a manner that provides for the long term maintenance of the natural and cultural values of the forest. The guidelines and standards in the code cover:

- building access into the forest (roads, bridges, quarries etc.)
- harvesting of timber
- conservation of natural values (soil and water, geomorphology, visual landscape, botany, zoology and cultural heritage)
- establishing and maintaining forests.



The FPA developed the code through extensive consultation and public comment. It is reviewed periodically, incorporating suggestions from scientists, government, the forestry industry and the public. As forest research continues, the code is updated and environmental prescriptions improved.

Forest Practices Officers

Forest Practices Officers, as employees of the forest industry or as private consultants, prepare and certify forest practices plans (FPPs), which must be in accordance with the *Forest Practices Code*, and supervise the implementation of plans and modify forest operations where necessary. They have the authority to issue notices to cease operations and repair any damage.

Forest Practices Officers must regularly inspect operations and lodge certificate of compliance with the FPA upon completion of each operational phase in the certified forest practices plan, such as road construction, quarry development, harvesting and reforestation. The certificate details the way in which the operation has complied with the forest practices plan. To ensure that uniformly high standards are achieved, the Forest Practices Authority provides regular training, closely monitors the performance of Forest Practices Officers and undertakes coupe auditing.

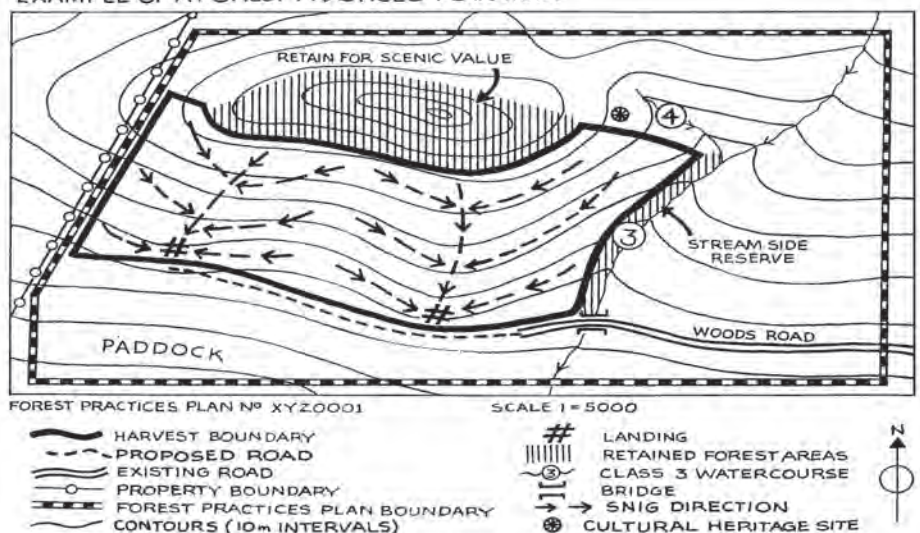
Forest Practices Plans

Forest practices plans (FPPs) are required for almost all forest practices on public and private land. FPPs must be prepared in accordance with the *Forest Practices Code* and be certified by a Forest Practices Officer (FPO) before work starts. FPPs provide details of the operation area, boundaries, roads, snig tracks, landings, bridges, streams and forest areas retained for conservation purposes. They also include prescriptions for the protection of natural and cultural values of the forest, planned harvest systems, and reforestation.

FPOs are required to identify the natural and cultural values of the forest when preparing a FPP. They must contact Forest Practices Authority specialists about any values requiring protection or special management prescriptions. The specialists then provide advice on the basis of regulatory requirements and the results of research and monitoring. This will frequently involve liaison with other scientists. The advice received may result in restrictions, such as harvesting being modified or areas being reserved for conservation reasons.

The activities outlined in the FPP may also need approval from local government, if required under the planning scheme and if the land is not a Private Timber Reserve or State forest. The council may impose additional conditions on the proposed operations. Applicants for FPPs must notify their neighbours and local government before operations begin.

EXAMPLE OF A FOREST PRACTICES PLAN MAP.



Case study: Earth Sciences Program

The objective of the Earth Sciences program in the FPA is to ensure that forest operations do not result in unacceptable rates of soil or stream erosion and that water quality and stream flows are maintained at acceptable levels. The program also seeks to improve the protection and management of geological heritage sites within forests, including the extensive and land-use sensitive karst systems (caves, related landforms and subsurface water flows) found in calcareous rocks.

The FPA's earth scientist seeks to achieve these objectives in three ways:

- provision of high-quality advice to Forest Practices Officers (FPOs) who prepare forest practices plans
- running training courses for FPOs
- conducting research and monitoring to promote improved understanding and management of forest soils, geological and water values.

The Earth Science Program provides advice to Forest Practices Officers (FPOs) by responding to enquiries received through the formal notification system. Many of these enquiries require coupe inspections with the FPO planning harvest and reforestation. Enquiries and notifications are received on topics as diverse as landslide risk, soil and stream erosion, sites of geological significance such as moraines or fossil localities, and occurrence of karst landforms including caves. Some notifications involve close cooperation with specialists in other disciplines.

The Soil and Water scientist in the FPA Earth Sciences program worked together with an FPO to devise prescriptions that would protect eroding streams in a coupe in the Huon River catchment, and at the same time provide habitat for the little Denison crayfish, the Mt Mangana stag beetle and two eagle nests nearby. The plan involved harvest of native forest in sections separated by wide stream-side reserves, as well as large reserves around eagle nests.



The coupe in the Huon River catchment

For further information please visit:

- www.fpa.tas.gov.au

Information source: Forest Practices Authority - Tasmania

Contact:

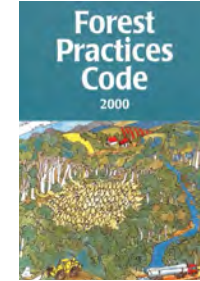
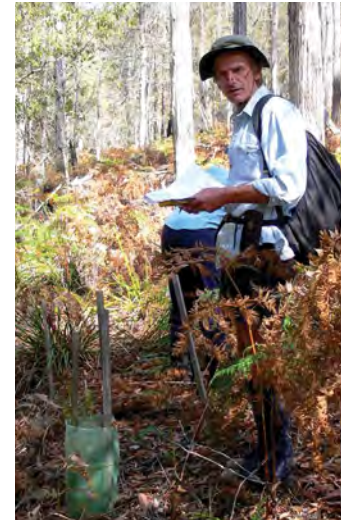
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Forest Practices



Planning Ahead for Harvesting & Reforestation

Tasmania's Forest Practices Code was developed following expert advice from scientists, government and the forestry industry, as well as extensive community consultation.

The code's guidelines and standards cover:

- Building roads and bridges to access the production forest
- Timber harvesting methods
- Conservation of natural and cultural values
- Regeneration and maintenance of forests

There are many Forest Practices Officers working in Tasmania. They are trained and authorised by the Forest Practices Authority to prepare and certify Forest Practices Plans; and then to supervise activities, ensuring that work in the forest is completed according to the plan.

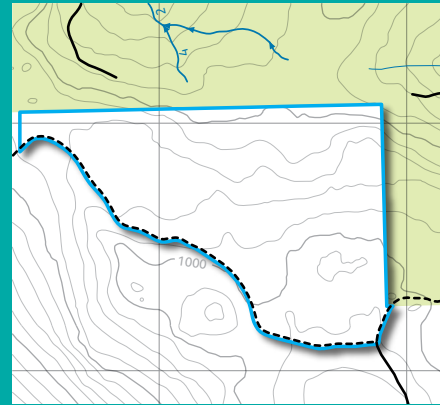
Long before any forest operation on private land or in State forest, trained and qualified Forest Practices Officers prepare a detailed plan that covers the full range of values – natural, cultural and economic – that apply to the area to be harvested and then reforested.

Forest Practices

Your Forest Practices Plan

On the included maps, follow the steps that a Forest Practices Officer might take as you work through the stages of preparing a Forest Practices Plan for the harvesting of an area of production forest – and the reforestation that will follow harvesting. This part of the process has major implications for future silvicultural systems, burning strategies, placement of wildlife corridors and a range of other factors.

Tasmania has extensive areas of forest reserves – but on these maps, you'll be planning the harvesting and reforestation of an area of production forest. Foresters call it a 'coupe'.



Stage 2

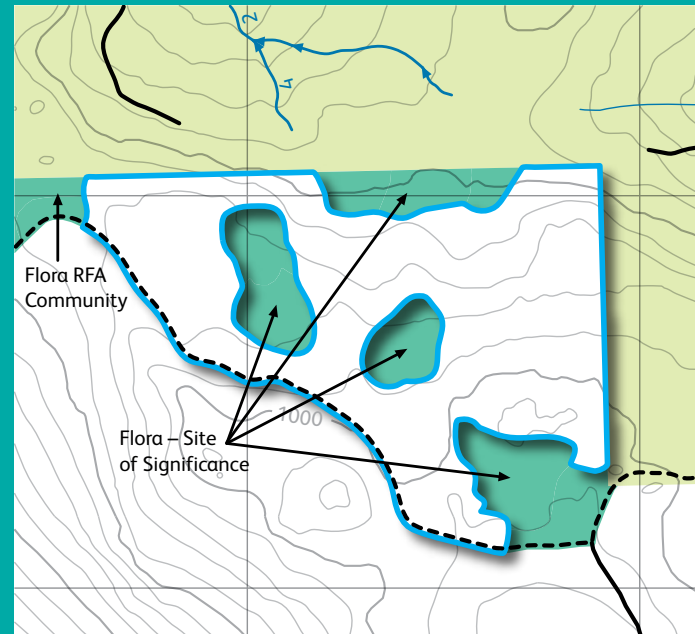
While surveying the site, you have discovered numerous areas within the coupe that require special management. There are four areas that contain sites of flora significance and a forest community that needs to be protected under the stipulations of the Regional Forest Agreement. Some of these sites contain buttongrass, moorland

sedgeland and sphagnum peatland, a very slow growing community that requires special protection. There are also areas of swampland and shrubby *E. pauciflora* forest, which is a priority forest community for protection. All these sites need to be excluded from any harvesting activity.

This non-forest community was identified during operational planning for this area. The photograph below displays the change from the moorland sedgeland community to one dominated by sphagnum moss located during flora planning for this area. This area will be excluded from the planned harvest boundary.

Stage 1

The area inside the blue line is potentially available for harvest. As a Forest Practices Officer, you now have to assess this area for any special values, such as fauna, flora, cultural values, geomorphological sites (such as caves), as well as features such as streams. Check the contours, too – they determine where access roads and tracks could be located. You'll also need to consider how the area will be reforested after harvest – this is an important step in the planning process.



Forest Practices

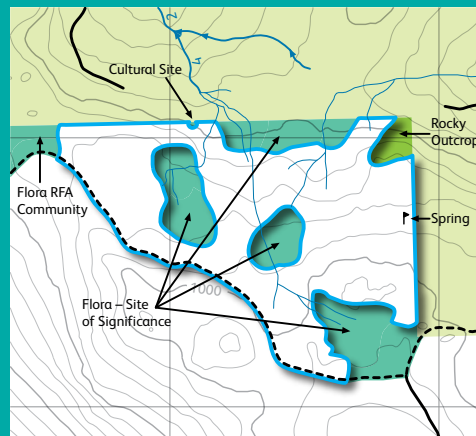
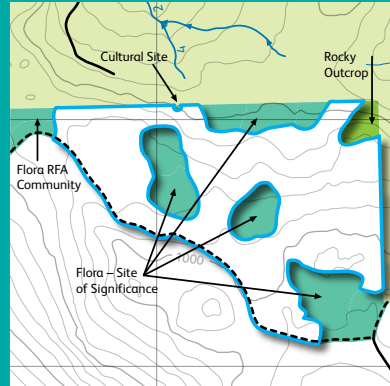
Your Forest Practices Plan

Stage 3

Further surveying has uncovered a small, but significant cultural site and a rocky outcrop that can not be harvested. The cultural site contains the remnants of an old chimney and wire fence that was probably constructed in the 1920s or 30s. As you can see already, just because a coupe has been marked for harvest, does not mean that the entire area can be utilised for obtaining timber.

Stage 4

More groundwork on your behalf has discovered numerous drainage lines running through the coupe, as well as a spring near the boundary. Protecting water values is an essential part of Forest Practices Plans; these drainage lines need to be considered in the planning process.

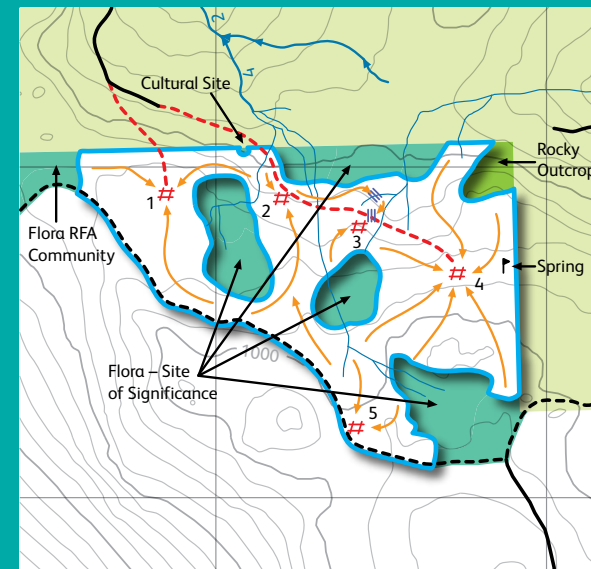


Stage 5

After an extensive survey, you are confident that you have identified all the special values associated with the coupe. Now you can carefully plan how to harvest the remaining area.

Roads need to be built to access the timber. The dotted red lines represent the roads into the coupe. Planning for roading accounts for contours of the land and existing roads to make sure there is the least amount of impact. Landing zones are where the logs will

be initially brought to for grading, which is important for value adding, making sure appropriate logs end up being utilised for the best purpose. Snig tracks (orange arrows) indicate how the logs will be brought to landing zones. Some of these tracks will intercept streams so crossings are also put in place to once again protect water values. All this planning needs to be done before any tree is harvested.



Sticking to the Plan

So, here is your completed Forest Practice Plan map – it shows the area of forest available for harvesting and the places where no logging will occur. The Forest Practice Plan is now developed to detail the prescriptions for the harvesting of the coupe.

The Forest Practices Officer will monitor the activities during the harvesting and ensure that rehabilitation measures and regeneration or replanting strategies meet the guidelines of the Code.

