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Guy Barnett, Minister for Resources

Innovation Creating Jobs in a Resurgent Native Forest Sector

Tasmania's native forest sector is renewable, sustainable, responsible, and an important provider of employment, particularly in our regional communities.

The Hodgman Liberal Government is committed to rebuilding the forest industry through ending the land lock-ups of the previous Labor-Green government and supporting innovation.

Today, I was pleased to visit with the State's largest native forest sawmiller, who, in a sign of why confidence is returning to the industry, is creating new jobs.

Neville Smith Forest Products operates a green mill at Southwood and a finishing and drying plant at Mowbray, with total employment of 100 Tasmanians.

A \$1.3 million value-adding project that will produce wood pellets and garden stakes from residues is expected to add another 12.5 Full-Time Equivalent jobs.

The investment includes a \$442,000 grant from the Tasmania Jobs and Investment Fund, a joint initiative of the Australian and Tasmanian governments.

This project is a great example of the potential that exists to add value to our forest industry and also of how governments can work together to support economic growth and job creation.

The wood pellets to be produced at Mowbray will use residues that would otherwise be discarded as waste, while residues from operations at Southwood will be made into garden stakes.

Neville Smith expects to commence the new operations in the second half of 2017.

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