

News Release **Minister Leon Bignell**

Minister for Forests

Friday, 8 August, 2014

ForestrySA review of Mid North options

Minister for Forests, Leon Bignell, has asked for community feedback following the release of an independent report into strategic directions for the Mid North Pine Plantation Estate.

The *Strategic Directions for MN Pine Plantation Estate* report was commissioned by the ForestrySA Board after the Bangor fire in January and February 2014 in the Mid North, which burned 1,600 hectares of the Wirrabara plantation.

This was following the fire in January 2013 which affected 450 hectares of the Bundaleer plantation.

Minister Bignell said, "The Government is aware of how important these plantations are, particularly from an economic perspective, to the local community.

"What we want to do now is to have discussions with people who live and work in the Mid North, before making a decision about what the best options are for the future.

"60 hectares of the Bundaleer plantation were replanted in June and July this year.

"However, replanting a larger area is a significant operation, so it is appropriate the Government considers all factors very carefully before making any decisions.

"The report is only one of a number of factors to consider.

"I know there will be people in the Mid North community who do not agree with the report's conclusions and I want to hear all sides of the debate.

"I also want to hear from tourism operators and other businesses about how we can diversify the local economy.

"I am keen to receive the views of as many people affected as possible and will visit the region later this year to hold wide-ranging discussions with the community," Minister Bignell said.

The report, *Strategic Directions for MN Pine Plantation Estate*, is published on the ForestrySA website at www.forestrysa.com.au/publications