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New funding boost for South West Forestry Hub

The South West Forestry Hub has been given an extra boost by the Federal Government with a series of announcements this week by Federal Forestry Minister, Senator Richard Colbeck.

The latest commitments, warmly welcomed by the Forest Industries Federation of WA (FIFWA), build substantially on the funding announced by the Prime Minister last month for an initial four “pilot” forestry hubs, including South West WA.

Speaking after a tour of the South West Forestry Hub, Senator Colbeck told a World Forestry Day Dinner hosted by the Leschenault Timber Industry Club, that the initial commitment of \$250,000 for each pilot forestry hub would now be expanded to a four-year commitment of \$250,000 per year. He also signalled that the South West will host a new node of the National Institute for Forest Products Innovation (NIFPI), with a \$2 million commitment, which will need to be matched by state government and industry funding.

This longer-term funding commitment will enable the South West Forestry Hub to make real progress on growing the plantation estate and manufacturing innovative new timber products, according to FIFWA acting CEO, Matt Granger.

“This provides the South West Forestry Hub with a platform to attract some serious third-party investment to get more trees in the ground,” said FIFWA acting CEO, Matt Granger.

“It also builds a solid foundation for attracting new investment into innovative wood products manufacturing,” Mr Granger said.

“The state and the industry need to double the area of land under softwood plantations to more than 80,000 hectares, if we are to meet the sustainable housing needs of our community,” Mr Granger said.

“We also need to boost the recovery of valuable products from our sustainably managed forest estate,” he added.

“This is welcome recognition by the Federal Government, and we appreciate Minister Colbeck’s announcements, and the on-going support of Federal Member for Forrest, Nola Marino,” he concluded.

Please direct all media enquiries to FIFWA Acting CEO Matt Granger on 0407 448 648 or m.granger@fifwa.asn.au

About FIFWA

Forest Industries Federation WA (FIFWA) has been representing the interests of the Western Australian timber industry since 1895. The industry is a key driver of economic activity and jobs in Western Australia, contributing \$1.4 billion to the WA economy and creating about 6000 jobs in WA, with more than 90% of those in regional areas. The industry employs careful and comprehensive management policies to ensure WA’s forests are sustainably managed. Less than 1% of the total forest area is harvested annually.

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