

## What do I get for my Levy payment?

Each year, over 850 people contact Private Forests Tasmania (PFT) for assistance and advice on a range of matters relating to their forests or forestry in general. The type of assistance provided varies - ranging from verbal advice over the phone to field inspections that may take half a day, or more, often with further follow up required. Any (current or intending) forest owner can avail themselves of this service and we provide it free of charge - but it has to be funded somehow. Most of the funding for this comes from the Government but income from the Levy, charged when a private forest owner engages in commercial harvesting operations, helps underpin our capacity to provide this service among many others.

Apart from the type of service outlined above much of PFT's support for private forest owners goes unnoticed as the activities often occur largely 'behind the scenes'. It should not be underestimated how much of our limited resources are directed towards these activities. Broadly, they are activities that directly or indirectly benefit all private forest owners who choose to actively manage their forests, such as:

- playing an active advocacy role for private forest owners through:
  - representation on boards and committees that contribute to the formulation of state and national forest policies;
  - regular discussions with / input direct to the Minister and his staff and, on occasions, other state and federal politicians;
  - regular discussions with the Resources Policy unit, Department of State Growth and, as appropriate, other State and Federal bureaucrats;
  - providing assistance to other private forestry related organisations, stakeholder representative groups and special interest community groups;
- assisting forest owners with challenging forest practices issues and, on occasions, assisting them with matters before the Forest Practices Tribunal;
- conducting field days and other events;
- researching and developing new business opportunities that have the potential to add value to private forests;
- conducting / participating in research activities on topics of relevance to private forests; and
- securing grant funds that directly benefit private owners – to date \$8.5 million over the last decade.

There is no doubt that without PFT's involvement in these activities the operating environment for private forest owners in Tasmania would be very different and considerably more challenging. The Levy that you pay makes an important contribution to underpinning our capacity to continue to support you and your fellow forest owners.