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Friday 30 April 2010**One million trees at Fairview plantation – and counting**

Students from Injune State High School today helped Santos mark the planting of one million trees at the Australian company's Fairview coal seam gas (CSG) field in Queensland.

The Year 10 students took time out from a tour of the gas field to plant a Chinchilla white gum in a ceremony marking a major milestone in the first large-scale plantation project approved for the beneficial use of water produced in the extraction of CSG.

Santos' President GLNG and Queensland Rick Wilkinson said the students were helping to create one of Australia's largest forestry plantations.

"I am delighted that the Injune students could be on hand to take part in this occasion – their energy and optimism are a perfect match for the values of Santos and the GLNG project.

"We care strongly about what happens in the region because it is our community, too. In fact some of our people in the Roma-Injune area are second generation workers for Santos."

Mr Wilkinson said the plantation had now reached the half-way mark of its target of two million native Chinchilla hardwood trees and agricultural feed crops over an area of 2,200 hectares.

"The plantation offers significant sustainable benefits to the environment and the Queensland community," Mr Wilkinson said. "The concept has a definite synergy with CSG extraction. Greatest quantities of CSG water are liberated in the earlier years of gas extraction, and the rate of water production then reduces over time.

"This cycle matches the time of greatest need for water by the trees during the establishment phase, and then a reduced requirement as they become more established."

Potential uses for the trees include commercial timber harvesting or carbon sequestration, or both. The trees produce a rich-red, high-density hardwood with uses including feature furniture and load-bearing applications.

Area Manager Queensland CSG Fields for Santos Sam Klaas said the Chinchilla White Gum was a hardy local tree that could grow to about 35 metres.

"It will tolerate a range of conditions and is demonstrating excellent early performance," Mr Klaas said. "The species will tolerate salinity, frost and drought and grows across a range of soil types in relatively low rainfall.

"The plantation project will create up to 100 jobs as well as providing major research opportunities for agro-forestry and water industries, and educational opportunities for schools and universities.

"There are eight local and regional contractors with 60 staff engaged in cultivation, mulching and tree-planting. We anticipate up to 20 contracting companies and four full time staff will be needed to maintain and monitor the forest on an ongoing basis."