

In reply please quote 58/03/08

8 April 2010

Your Reference

Telephone Enquiries Michael Chesworth



**Murrindindi**

Shire Council

Mr. Joshua Chikuse  
Vic Forests  
213 Maroondah Hwy  
Hallsville VIC 3777

Dear Joshua,

**Re: Proposed Amendment to the Timber Release Plan (TRP) for the Central Forest Management Areas**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the above TRP.

In responding to this issue the Council seeks to achieve a balance between (1) supporting sustainable timber harvesting operations in the Shire, (2) supporting ongoing access to the forests and preserving their aesthetic values for nature based tourism, and (3) protecting biodiversity values and longer term environmental sustainability.

It is noted that the amendment to the TRP has been prepared to take into consideration the impacts of the 2009 bushfires which has reduced the availability of harvestable timber amongst previously allocated areas. It is also noted that the amendment does not increase the total quota of timber available for harvest under the Department of Sustainability and Environment's Timber Allocation Order that was issued in 2004.

The Council is concerned however, that the amendment to the TRP is taking place prior to the issuing of the foreshadowed amendment of the Timber Allocation Order, which was reviewed in June 2009 in accordance with statutory requirements. It is anticipated that the amended Allocation Order will reduce the defined forest stands that are available for harvest in the region, given the impacts of the 2009 fires, reduced availability of timber and the need to achieve longer term sustainable regeneration of the forest.

With changes to the Allocation Order to be released soon, it is the Council's view that the proposed number of coupes used for clear felling of green timber listed in the TRP Amendment be halved, so as to provide an 18 month harvest quota. This should be sufficient to meet production and allow some flexibility for VicForests in the interim whilst the expected amendment to the Allocation Order is being finalized. This would avoid the potential for a larger area to be set aside for harvesting than would be permitted under a potentially reduced Timber Allocation Order.

ALEXANDRA  
Perkins Street,  
Alexandra, 3714

Ph: 03 5772 0333  
Fax: 03 5772 2291  
Local call: 1800 633 792

KINGLAKE  
19 Whittlesea-,  
Kinglake Road,  
Kinglake, 3763

Ph: 03 5786 1522  
Fax: 03 5786 1515  
Local call: 1800 651 821

YEA  
Civic Centre,  
Semi Circle,  
Yea, 3717

Ph: 03 5797 2209  
Fax: 03 5797 2900  
Local call: 1800 672 719

Please address all  
correspondence to  
P.O. Box 138,  
Alexandra, 3714  
DX: 71402

Email:  
msc@murrindindi.vic.gov.au

Website:  
www.murrindindi.vic.gov.au

ABN 83 600 647 004

It is understood the TRP can be further amended once the amended Allocation Order is issued.

From the Council's perspective this approach would provide an appropriate response to balance the interests as outlined at the commencement of the letter.

Please do not hesitate to contact me on 03 5772 0333 if you require further clarification.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. Chesworth', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Michael Chesworth  
Acting Chief Executive Officer