

Media Release

27th April 2018

VicForests releases Noojee coupe map

VicForests today released pre-harvest maps of a Noojee timber coupe indicating that total protected and buffered areas comprise 13 hectares, or nearly one quarter (24%), of the gross coupe area.

This area includes about 7ha of additional voluntary visual buffers in response to community preferences to screen the “Backdoor” coupe from the centre of the township.

This comprises two 100metre-deep visual buffers on the south-eastern end of the coupe. The buffers are added to a pre-existing 200 metre Special Protection Zone (SPZ) between the coupe and the town.

In the northern end of the coupe, VicForests also voluntarily reserved an area for habitat trees for Greater Gliders, and other gliders, and to allow them free movement in and out of other parts of the forest.

The coupe plan, designed to guide harvesting contractors, has also been released. It indicated three Greater Glider sightings by VicForests over three days inside the harvesting area, and other reported sightings by third parties over five months since last October.

Alex Messina, VicForests General Manager Corporate Affairs said the harvesting area was now 28.95ha of the gross area of 55 ha.

“Vicforests has and will continue to consult with DELWP, who is responsible for fire management in relation to fire risk, until regeneration takes place,” he said.

“Even within this 28.95ha harvestable area, there are further retained seed and habitat trees. These will be preserved during harvesting to assist re-seeding and regenerating the coupe, and to maximise the future potential habitats for glider species,” Mr Messina said.

He stressed no harvesting would occur before 3 May. This was because the coupe, and five others, is currently subject to a temporary injunction related to a separate legal matter. Depending on a Federal Court outcome on 2 May, harvesting may or may not commence, but the intention remains to harvest.

VicForests has been consulting with the Noojee community for seven months.

“This coupe has been on our Timber Release Plan since 2011, when initial notification occurred,” he said. “Since August last year, we have met with the community on three occasions.”

“The native timber industry contributes hundreds of millions of dollars and thousands of jobs to regional Victoria,” Mr Messina said. “VicForests conducts sustainable harvesting and forest regeneration in just 0.04% of native forests in any one year. We regrow coupes with the same species as originally there.”

“The vast majority of Victoria’s native forests will never be harvested.”

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