

VicForests seeks community input on updates to Timber Release Plan and Timber Utilisation Plan

VicForests has started public consultation on draft Timber Release Plan and Timber Utilisation Plan amendments.

Stakeholder feedback on proposed harvest areas is an important part of VicForests' planning process.

VicForests chief executive Monique Dawson said that the draft amendments would remove 7,835 ha of state forests and add 15,832 ha for future operations. The change has arisen due to new harvesting practices, implemented in 2019, which retain up to 80 per cent of each coupe to protect biodiversity.

The total area of timber harvested is expected to be in line with recent years – between 2,500 ha and about 3,000 ha per year – and less than historical levels of more than 4000 ha per year.

Ms Dawson said that the proposed amendments aim to provide flexibility to support long-term planning and certainty for timber processors and harvest and haulage operators.

“VicForests' harvest planning process aligns with the Victorian Government's recently announced Forestry Plan and includes detailed field assessments to identify forest biodiversity and social, historical and cultural values, and to determine soil and water protection measures,” Ms Dawson said.

“Community feedback is an important part of the planning process and we welcome all input.”

A schedule of proposed timber harvesting areas, location maps and a feedback form for public comment are available at www.vicforests.com.au/proposedtrp and www.vicforests.com.au/proposedtup.

Submissions can also be provided until 5pm on 12 December via email to vfs.trp@vicforests.com.au or made in writing and sent to: VicForests, GPO Box 191, Melbourne, 3001.

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