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Burning Tasmania: Forestry halt. The facts.

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EDITOR'S CHOICE

Kim Booth, Greens Forests spokesman
19.04.10 12:16 pm
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The Tasmanian Greens today again called on Forestry Tasmania to acknowledge the respiratory damage being caused by so-called regeneration burns which have once again blanketed parts of Tasmania with thick smoke today, and to cease this primitive and unnecessary practice which incinerates thousands of tonnes of forest products every year during Autumn in Tasmania.

Greens Forests spokesperson Kim Booth MP said these regeneration burns are completely unnecessary and are actually using the public's airshed, and lungs, as a dumping ground to save the forest industry money that would otherwise have to be spent on mulching the so-called 'waste' left behind after industrial logging.

Mr Booth also said that Forestry Tasmania committed to prevent this situation from occurring again this year after it blanketed large parts of Tasmania with smoke during March last year [1], and called on Forestry Tasmania to explain why it continued to allow the ignition of more regeneration burns in southern Tasmania yesterday when it was obvious that the smoke from burns in preceding days was not clearing. [2,3,4]

"It is way past time that the Tasmanian Government and Forestry Tasmania actually recognised the widespread respiratory damage that is occurring when people's homes and workplaces are blanketed by smoke for extended periods of time, and ceased the archaic process of incinerating huge volumes of wasted timber left behind in clearfelled coupes," said Mr Booth.

"These so-called regeneration burns are completely unnecessary and are simply transferring the cost of cleaning up the clearfelled coupe away from the companies involved, and into the lungs of most Tasmanians."

"Last year Forestry Tasmania committed not to blanket the state with smoke for days on end, but they have abjectly failed in this commitment, and in fact have continued to light regeneration burns when it was patently obvious that the smoke from previous days' burns was not clearing."

"Forestry Tasmania must stop prioritising the profits of private forestry companies over the respiratory health of all Tasmanians, and immediately move to cease this primitive and unnecessary practice," said Mr Booth.

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- [Apr18_Regen_Burn_over_Judbury_from_Glen_Huon_North_KBooth_ATTACH.pdf](#)
- [Apr19_Pollution_Limits_The_Mercury-March2009_KBooth_ATTACH.pdf](#)

Mercury: Forestry halts burnoffs (with great Leigh Winburn pic):

FORESTRY Tasmania has issued an unprecedented immediate ban on regeneration and timber reduction burns.

Forestry Tasmania today called on all private landowners and forestry companies across the state to immediately stop all regeneration and timber reduction burning operations. Much of Tasmania remains shrouded in dense smoke, with little wind forecast to shift the smoke clouds.



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As Hobart, the Derwent estuary, Channel county and Huon Valley was blanketed by low-lying clouds of smoke combined with fog, Forestry Tasmania announced it had suspended all of its scheduled burning of logged timber coupes in the state's south for today.



Regeneration burns were conducted by Forestry Tasmania in the North West of the state and around the Huon region over the weekend in accordance with the Coordinated Smoke Management Strategy.



FT general manager of operations Paul Smith said smoke from weekend burns around Huon had failed to disperse overnight, and had then been prevented from clearing by foggy weather conditions.



He requested the support of other Tasmanian landowners to cease burning today to allow the smoke to clear.



"The smoke hovering over the Huon region is the result of many burns conducted by various land managers including the forest industry, parks and wildlife, farmers and private landowners over the past few days", Mr Smith said.



"The smoke from these burns has failed to disperse as a result of foggy weather conditions and as such Forestry Tasmania has suspended burns in the south of the state and requests all land managers to follow suit to allow the smoke to clear".



More information on the location of proposed burns can be found by visiting the plannedburnstas.com.au website.



The news comes as Huon Valley residents were furious that Forestry Tasmania burns sent thick smoke across the region yesterday.



The Mercury fielded numerous calls from residents from Huonville to Cygnet, who said the smoke was disrupting weekend activities and causing health problems.



The Forestry website said last night the state-owned company had nine fires alight south of Hobart. For details go to <http://www.forestrytas.com.au/planned-burns>.



Read more HERE



The ABC has been running very hot with calls re smoke from burns. The Asthma Foundation has issued warnings.



Seems most of the smoke is from forestry regeneration burns, plus some from private landowner burns.



People can also report complaints to the EPA.



Mornings with Tim Cox says: "We've been talking a bit this morning about the smoke hanging around parts of Tasmania in the still autumn weather. Here are some photos uploaded to the ABC and contributed by people in southern Tasmania. If you've got something you'd like to share with us, head to: **HERE**



And, Gunns builds loading plant, Nick Clark, Mercury

The speed of work at Portland contrasts with the situation at Bell Bay, where native forest harvesting restarts tomorrow after a 3½-week shutdown.



Mr L'Estrange said plantation forestry would become the primary focus of the company in the medium term.



The facility was announced in July last year but since then the forestry industry has hit a number of hurdles and Gunns announced a dramatically reduced half-year profit.



Gunns' expenditure on the facility comes despite analysts warning the company is in danger of breaching debt covenants in the first half of 2010—in particular the ratio between total debt and earnings.



Read more HERE

Angelika and Robert Allen (Quality Air Tasmania)

What people are not hearing is that pollution levels peaked at over 250, with PM10 of 123 /50 and PM 2.5 of 90/25.(Environment) This is a blow out of nearly 3 to 4 times more than the NEPM exceedence standards. See attached Environment monitoring result. Under law in the EMPCA act the EPA is obliged to prosecute as 'pollution has crossed boundaries.' Yet despite this recurrence of fumigation for years the EPA has not prosecuted anyone for pollution to date.

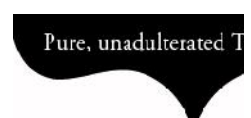
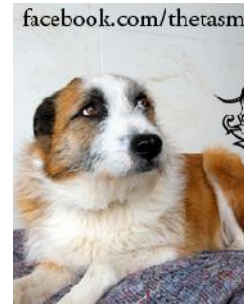


Residents of Geevston are entitled to be immediately offered relocation expenses during fumigation under the Act as 'polluters should bear share of costs.' There were about a dozen high and low intensity logging rubbish burn-ffs (not regeneration or fuel reduction) in the Geevston vicinity yesterday. This is the result of FPA's new smoke management strategy but what is required is non forestry regulation of forestry and large scale burn pollution.



Dave's view: HERE

Mark's view: HERE



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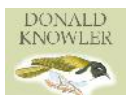
Clive Stott: Excuse me for thinking this was Tasmania: [HERE](#)

[Download 'Excedence of 24 hour average in Geeveston 19.doc'](#)

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Tasmanian Tim