

Smoke deters forestry burns

May 28, 2010 08:30am

FORESTRY burn-offs were called off yesterday because smoke levels were already double national standards.

Forestry Tasmania said the scheduled burns at five Huon Valley sites were part of an annual fuel reduction program.

But low winds and existing smoke in the valley meant they had to be postponed in accordance with Tasmania's Co-ordinated Smoke Management Strategy.

Forestry said data recorded at Geeveston suggested wood-fire smoke content was more than double the National Environmental Protection (Ambient Air Quality) Measure at 8am.

It said no forestry burns had contributed to the measure.

The burn-offs were scheduled for Glovers Bluff, Four Foot Plain, Camels Back and the Weld and Arve plains, covering a total area of about 1000ha.

There was a Forestry Tasmania burn southwest of Launceston yesterday.

The postponement comes after growing concern about smoke from forestry burns, many of them classified as regeneration burns, particularly because of health effects from pollution.

The concern and warnings have come from health authorities and organisations during the annual autumn burns.

Last month public health director Roscoe Taylor said dangerous particle quantities around Burnie exceeded national limits many times after a Gunns Ltd burn.

And earlier this month Forestry Tasmania apologised for smoke pollution that choked the Huon for five days in April.

The problems arose despite the introduction of the smoke management strategy which some foresters said had curtailed their normal burns program.

The area of proposed fires is mapped at www.plannedburnstas.com.au.

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To all those people who believe that these forestry burns are necessary you are wrong. I was involved in the 67 bush fire, I was fighting for my life at times and saw first hand the before and after of a major wild fire. The wick for this fire in the area that I was involved in was the farm land grass paddocks. On the first day the temperature was high and the humidity was very low with a hot dry wind. Once the fire reached bushland the fire raced through the tree tops and the ground litter was a relatively slow burn. Not one of these forestry burns would have made any difference to the outcome of the 67 fire. What these burns are doing however is contributing to the early deaths of people who are forced to breathe this 2.5 particulate laden smoke. If Ivan Dean was to spend more time stopping these burns and less on a few people puffing in the streets there would be less people suffering from the effects of smoke.

Posted by: **max** 10:47am Monday 31st May

It's just Trees, who cares.

Posted by: **Cameron Luke Joyce of Coogee Bay** 08:00am Monday 31st May

It seems that Forestry Tas are saying the elevated smoke levels are because of domestic heating, when they say "wood-fire smoke." If so, this is totally incorrect. There were many Tas Fire Service registered

burns going on the 27th in that area and these would be smoky this time of the year. Probably one of those would make as much smoke as all the domestic heaters combined. Forestry Tas need to be more honest and give all the facts.

Posted by: **Ciive Stott** 02:57pm Saturday 29th May

Good on you Donna. Ben I drink tea mate. Colin, I was born in 1957 and I remember the line of bull that spearheaded the introduction of woodchipping during the 70's; 'burn waste' yeah right! since then the timber mills are gone, the forests are gone, the roads inundated with trucks taking forests to make toilet paper. People prevented from collecting firewood and specialty timbers like blackwood and myrtle destroyed by the thousands of hectares annually. Water polluted, air quality diminished, and you want that to continue?

Posted by: **Kevin Markham of Hobart** 02:23pm Saturday 29th May

Id Like to think that these burn offs were to reduce fuel in case we do have a wild fire come through but these burn offs are only to stop people being able to access wood left lying around coupes. These are burn offs just to get rid of the evidence of what use to be our beautiful forest, now we can plant more to make more money. Im sure there would be enough timber left to keep people warm and for all the people that use these timbers to make amazing Tasmanian furniture and craft. Im yet to see an actual burn off that does reduce fuel to protect us from a fire. If it wasnt for John Gay and his mates we still would have many little saw mills employing many people but bring in the big gunns take as much as you can today who cares about tomorrow, it really is a dying industry you can only take so much, move on and focus on just how beautiful this state is and promote it. By Johnny perhaps their is a job in Tourism for you lol.

Posted by: **Donna** 10:37am Saturday 29th May

One more time for the likes of Max and Robin...the scheduled burns are archaic self serving regen burns...NOT COMMUNITY SERVICE WILDFIRE FUEL REDUCTION BURNS.

Posted by: **Scope of The Huon** 09:21am Saturday 29th May

Kelvin Markham, boy have you got one big chip on your shoulder. You obviously wernt born before the 1967 bush fires when Hobart was surrounded by wild fire with many people losing their lives. You obviously didnt learn anything from the Wielangta and Scamanda fires a few years back and you must have been on the moon when the fires were burning in victoria. FT do supply a service to our community with their fire service, I for one help as a contractor man their fire towers which report ANY fire that has been spotted and reported to the relevant authorities and also assist with their fire duty roster. This is just one example of a service that is provided by FT to the general public that doesnt provide a financial return but helps keep us safer.

Posted by: **Colin from the east coast** 09:13am Saturday 29th May

To Kelvin Markham of Hobart. This rant of use has nothing to do with the story. It seems it is well rehearsed. How about getting outside and get a dose of reality instead sitting inside drinking your latte.

Posted by: **ben of derwent valley** 08:09am Saturday 29th May

Sorry kids, no napalm fun today! You'll have to wait to blow up the bush.

Posted by: **Unreal** 08:01am Saturday 29th May

I wish I could get my hands on some of that fuel for my slow combustion wood heater to keep my family warm during winter.

Posted by: **James of Rokeby** 06:45am Saturday 29th May

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