

REPORT BY SAVEYOURLEATHERWOODHONEY ASSOCIATION - 9 MONTHS TO 15TH JUNE 2018.

Our main work during this period has involved completing a draft response to a new draft Planning Guidelines for Apiary Values prepared by Sustainable Timber Tasmania (STT).

This is intended to replace the Guidelines for Leatherwood in State Forest which have been in place for over 10 years and proved to be substantially unworkable and wholly unenforceable.

While the TBA spent time considering our draft we have also been drafting a new definition of the leatherwood resource, which if adopted and followed by STT would preserve leatherwood for both the present and into the future.

This definition will form part of the new Planning Guidelines. and is set out as follows:

"1.Patches of mature and immature leatherwood comprising 0.5 ha or greater where any leatherwood stem is within 20 metres of 3 or more leatherwood stems.

2, Any area of a coupe where mature and immature leatherwood trees comprise at least 25% of the number of trees in that area.

or

3. Any area of a coupe where mature and immature leatherwood trees comprise at least 25% of the forest canopy."

*THE BEEKEEPERS HAVE TO DECIDE WHICH OF NUMBERS 2 OR 3 ARE MORE BENEFICIAL OR WHETHER THEY ARE MUTUALLY NECESSARY OR MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE.*

" TOGETHER WITH

any area of mature or immature leatherwood comprising at least 0.1 ha in an area which lies on the inside and adjacent to a stand of commercial leatherwood which is located outside that boundary. In that case the coupe boundary must be drawn to exclude the said area."

*TSS ARE TO CONSIDER INCLUDING THI PROVISION.*

*THERE IS PRECEDENT FOR THIS AS IN THE PAST IT HAS BEEN APPLIED IN SOME CASES IN THE DERWENT DISTRICT.*

*THE BEEKEEPERS HAVE ASKED THAT THE FOLLOWING PROVISION PREVIOUSLY USED IN A FOREST PRACTISES PLAN (FPP), (ie RD O16B), BE INCLUDED AS A CATCH ALL SAFETY MECHANISM IN THIS DOCUMENT.*

*QUOTED FROM THE FPP*

*"The contractor is to notify Forestry Tasmania (now Sustainable Timber Tasmania), immediately if any areas that have moderate or high stocking of leatherwood trees are found in the coupe and are not identified on the ground as being outside the harvest area. There are to be no forestry operations within at least 10 metres of the edge of such leatherwood areas until assessment by the Forestry Tasmania (Sustainable Timber Tasmania), officer".*

*The beekeepers wish to add to that " this is to operate in addition to all other provisions of this document".*

Preparing this definition involved receiving and considering opinions /suggestions from senior beekeepers of what the definition should contain and then settling that with the TBA president and vice president.

SST are now very keen to adopt and adhere to strict Planning Guidelines which will result in the retention of Commercial Leatherwood as defined. However the concept that ALL commercial leatherwood be retained is still being resisted by STT.

Notwithstanding this, the change by STT is largely driven by the relevant Government minister. It seems clear that the Government knows/believes that without maintaining the beekeeping and pollination industries at their present level and enlarging them in the near future, there will not only be less leatherwood resource and less hives available for pollination over time, but absolutely no growth in pollination services as required by the Agricultural Industry

The Government has spent millions of dollars on new irrigation and water storage infrastructure without consulting with the beekeeping and pollination industries as to the availability of pollination services to serve the additional agricultural cropping.

The Government's plan to double agricultural production by 2020 and increase it by a factor of 10 by 2050 requires a similar increase in pollination levels.

The reality is that there can be no increase in honey bee pollination unless the loss of leatherwood in wood harvesting coupes controlled by STT is to totally halt (to at least hold the line), and also that substantial access to new areas of leatherwood are discovered in reserve and Tasmanian World Heritage areas and made available to beekeepers to enable the industry to expand.

Our latest draft of the Planning Guidelines (including the definition of Commercial Leatherwood) is to be settled shortly by the TBA and submitted to STT.

In the meantime we have obtained and paid for the current 3 year plans for Tasmania and are commencing to assess the same for wood harvesting impact on the resource. This is long and patience wearing work. As we advance this work any affected beekeepers will be advised and asked to verify the situation on the ground. Any wood harvesting which goes

against the intent of the new Planning Guidelines will be immediately drawn to the attention of STT and the Minister for Forests

If necessary this 3 year plan work will be done in conjunction with one or more of our members.

When the Planning Guidelines have been agreed with STT (if that occurs), we will then use its content to draft amendments to the Forest Practises Code. This will be the most substantial and important drafting and negotiating work we have ever carried out.

If and when this is successfully completed and the code is amended the provisions will be enshrined in law and subject to the control and oversight of Forest Practises Officers. It is these officers who oversee the production of FPP`s Also if necessary, these officers will deal with any breaches of the code whether arising from complaint or inspection.

We will keep you informed when that work begins.

Once again a sincere thank you to all our members and other supporters.

Bob Davey (President).