



Save Your Leatherwood Honey Inc.

SAVEYOURLEATHERWOODHONEY ASSOCIATION

JUNE 2008 NEWSLETTER

This newsletter consists substantially of an extract from our recent media release. That release led to a flurry of media interviews and was conveniently occurring at the time of the publication of the report of the Commonwealth Inquiry into the Honey Bee Industry in Australia. All this led to some interesting media attention and interviewing. While the media's focus was mostly on the Report's recommendation that access to reserve, (eg World Heritage), areas be given to beekeepers, we were able to again make the point that destruction of the resource, (leatherwood), would inevitably lead to the demise of a vibrant beekeeping and pollination industry in Tasmania. Our role as an Association has now moved substantially from one of publicity of the existence of a serious problem, to one of monitoring and coordinating the liaison between beekeepers and Forestry planners. However we remain vigilant and ready to do whatever it takes to keep the process moving and if necessary lobbying to prevent any regression.

BEEKEEPERS AND FORESTRY TASMANIA - WORKING TOGETHER AT LAST

AT THE INITIATIVE OF FORESTRY TASMANIA PLANNERS, THE SOUTHERN BEEKEEPERS OPERATING IN THE WEDGE BLOCK OF THE DERWENT DISTRICT HAVE BEEN INVITED TO INSPECT THOSE AREAS WHERE HARVESTING COUPES FOR THE NEXT THREE YEARS, ARE PLANNED TO BE SITUATED, AND ASSIST IN THE DRAWING OF COUPE BOUNDARIES SO AS TO PRESERVE THE LEATHERWOOD RESOURCE.

THE BEEKEEPERS ARE ALSO BEING ASKED TO ASSIST IN ASSESSING THE LEATHERWOOD CONTENT OF ALL THE WEDGE BLOCK TO ASSIST THE PLANNERS IN IDENTIFYING AND SETTING ASIDE AREAS OF COMMERCIAL LEATHERWOOD IN HARVESTING PLANS BEYOND THE THREE YEARS ENDING 2010.

THE BEEKEEPERS HAVE BEEN PLEADING WITH FORESTRY TASMANIA FOR THIS APPROACH FOR MORE THAN 20 YEARS.

THIS IS A MAJOR BREAKTHROUGH IN DIALOGUE AND COOPERATION BETWEEN THE BEEKEEPING INDUSTRY AND FORESTRY TASMANIA IN THE SOUTHERN FOREST. THE SOUTHERN BEEKEEPERS HAVE WELCOMED THE INITIATIVE AND HAVE IMMEDIATELY COMPLETED A ROSTER OF BEEKEEPERS WHO WILL ARE WILLING AND ABLE TO ACCOMPANY THE FORESTRY PLANNERS TO ENSURE EARLY INSPECTION OF THE AREAS WHEN THE PLANNERS ARE REQUIRED TO FINALISE THE COUPE BOUNDARIES FOR THE NEXT THREE YEARS.

AS WELL AS PERMITTING/ENCOURAGING RESOURCE ASSESSMENT AND COUPE BOUNDARY COOPERATION, FORESTRY TASMANIA IS MAKING AVAILABLE PREVIOUSLY "UNAVAILABLE" DETAILS OF HARVESTING TECHNIQUES AND STRATEGIES, INCLUDING MEDIUM TO LONG TERM FOREST AND RESOURCE CLASSIFICATIONS. THESE WILL BE OF GREAT ASSISTANCE TO THE BEEKEEPERS IN UNDERSTANDING

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WHAT IS INTENDED FROM A HARVESTING AND PRESERVATION PERSPECTIVE IN REMAINING LEATHERWOOD RICH RESOURCE AREAS, WHEN PLANNING THEIR HIVE PLACEMENTS IN FUTURE YEARS.

BASED ON STATEMENTS BY THE FORESTRY PLANERS, THE BEEKEEPERS EXPECT TO BE INVOLVED IN THE ASSESSMENT OF OTHER BLOCKS IN THE DERWENT DISTRICT SUCH AS TYENNA, FLORENTINE, STYX ETC, IN THE NEAR FUTURE. THEY ARE ALSO EXPECTING AN INVITATION IN THE NEAR FUTURE TO BECOME INVOLVED IN THE SETTING OF COUPE BOUNDARIES IN HARVESTING PLANS FOR THE HUON DISTRICT. THE HUON IS THE OTHER AREA IN THE SOUTH OF TASMANIA WHERE THERE ARE SOME STANDS OF COMMERCIAL LEATHERWOOD REMAINING, ALTHOUGH THE MAJORITY HAS NOW DISAPPEARED.

FORESTRY TASMANIA HAS INDICATED THAT IN AREAS WHERE THERE ARE COMMERCIAL STANDS OF LEATHERWOOD, THEY WANT TO COMPLETE ASSESSMENTS AND THE SETTING OF COUPE BOUNDARIES DURING THE NEXT 5 MONTHS AND AS A RESULT REACH AGREEMENT WITH THE BEEKEEPERS AS TO THE BEST OUTCOME AVAILABLE FOR BOTH THE BEEKEEPING AND TIMBER INDUSTRIES.

THIS NEW AND EXCITING DEVELOPMENT DOES NOT HOWEVER SOLVE THE INEVITABLE CONFLICT WHICH WILL ARISE WHERE BOTH LEATHERWOOD AND TIMBER RESOURCE COEXIST IN A COUPE AND THE PRESERVATION OF ONE MUST BE COMPROMISED FOR THE SAKE OF HARVESTING THE OTHER.

HOWEVER THE TASMANIAN BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION THROUGH ITS REPRESENTATION ON THE APIARY WORKING PARTY, (FACILITATED BY THE FOREST AND FOREST INDUSTRIES COUNCIL), IS WORKING TOWARDS A NEW PROTOCOL FOR RESOLVING THIS ISSUE WITHOUT THE NEED FOR CONFRONTATION.

ALL OF THIS IS TOPICAL GIVEN THE IMMINENT RELEASE OF THE REPORT BY THE COMMITTEE OF THE COMMONWEALTH INQUIRY INTO THE HONEYBEE INDUSTRY IN AUSTRALIA. THE REPORT IS EXPECTED TO FIND THAT THE LACK OF RESOURCE POSES A MAJOR THREAT TO THE BEEKEEPING AND POLLINATION INDUSTRIES THROUGHOUT AUSTRALIA, INCLUDING TASMANIA, WHERE IT IS BROUGHT ABOUT BY THE DIMINISHING LEATHERWOOD RESOURCE.

THIS IS NOT ONLY GOOD NEWS FOR THE BEEKEEPERS BUT ALSO FOR THE HORTICULTURALISTS WHO RELY ON THE BEEKEEPERS FOR THE POLLINATION OF THEIR CROPS

THERE IS NOW A REAL POSSIBILITY OF WORKING TOWARDS AN END TO THE "TRENCH WARFARE" WHICH HAS DOMINATED THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TIMBER AND BEEKEEPING INDUSTRIES OVER THE LAST 20 YEARS OR SO.

THE PRESERVATION OF THE REMAINING LEATHERWOOD RESOURCE IN THE SOUTH OF TASMANIA DEPENDS ON STRICT COMPLIANCE WITH THIS NEW APPROACH.

We rely on your continued support which to date has been crucial in helping us contribute to the achievements of Southern Beekeepers over the past 3 years.

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