

Logging area doubles under new plan

Narelle Towie

Published: December 6 2013 - 3:42PM

More than 2000 square kilometres of old jarrah and karri forest can be logged in WA's South West under a new 10-year Forest Management Plan for Western Australia – double the area previously allowed.

The move has outraged conservationists who claim the logging will be a death sentence to threatened wildlife, including WA's mammal emblem the numbat.

Environment Minister Albert Jacob said the new plan, which will be in play from 2014 until 2023, ensures biodiversity and water catchments are protected, while allowing for recreation and a sustainable native forest products industry.

"The volumes available for harvesting in the new plan are similar to the existing 2004-13 plan," Mr Jacob said.

"Under the exiting plan, 131,000 cubic metres of jarrah and 54,000 of karri could be harvested annually. The new plan will allow for 132,000 cubic metres of jarrah and 59,000 of karri."

"The plan is based on scientific knowledge, and the potential impact of climate change has been taken into account," Mr Jacob said.

Meanwhile, an extra 4000 hectares has been afforded protection in Whicher National Park near Busselton and all old-growth forest, totalling more than 334,000 hectares, will continue to be off limits to loggers.

Conservation Council director Piers Verstegen said while the volumes of wood harvested remains the same, the area being felled has increased.

He says carbon dating of wood chips revealed 600-year-old trees, which were critical habitat for wildlife including endangered species, were currently being felled.

"They are logging ancient forest in a completely unsustainable way at a loss to the state, we are subsidising it as taxpayers and it just doesn't make sense," Mr Verstegen said.

"Last year, it cost taxpayers over \$20 million to destroy habitat for endangered wildlife. Instead we could be earning millions of dollars in profit per year by protecting forests and selling carbon credits."

"No other industry would be able to get away with destruction of critical habitat for threatened wildlife at this scale, but the logging industry is exempt from both state and Commonwealth Wildlife Conservation laws."

Mr Jacob said all harvested areas will be regenerated, maintaining the current area of forests in the South West.

Meanwhile, protesters halted logging in Walpole this week when a man suspended himself in a bathtub 8 meters above ground. The bathtub was tied to two logging machines. The move follows another protester in the same area perching 7 metres above the forest floor on a steel pole.

- Follow WAtoday on Twitter

This story was found at: <http://www.watoday.com.au/wa-news/logging-area-doubles-under-new-plan-20131206-2ywio.html>

Most Read Articles

WA Today

[Cover your eyes kids: Perth families shown horror flick trailer](#)

['Dine and dash' accused failing to comply with bail conditions: Police](#)

['There's no backup': Baby formula crisis hits prescription market](#)

[West Coast's hopes of winning derby rocked with injury doubts](#)

[Man dies after family violence incident in Kelmscott](#)

The Sydney Morning Herald

['Not just a lonely guy with a calculator': Mathematicians enter top 10 earners](#)

[Cover your eyes kids: Perth families shown horror flick trailer](#)

['Like a horror movie': my day in a Chinese cockroach factory](#)

[Sydney's richest and poorest postcodes have barely changed since 2004](#)

[New type of poverty hurting middle class](#)

The Age

['We're very good at our jobs': Air traffic controllers enter top 10 earners](#)

[In a field of its own: Tiny Tynong's one of our top-earning postcodes](#)

[Relief from the crush: Busiest rail lines set for a big timetable boost](#)

[Dramatic arrest in Melbourne's CBD after man threatens to shoot tram passengers](#)

['There's no backup': Baby formula crisis hits prescription market](#)

Brisbane Times

[Queensland's highest-paid identified with surgical precision](#)

[Brisbane City Council fines dawn service-attending residents at 4am on Anzac day](#)

[Quirk u-turns on CityCat and food market as part of 20-kilometre parkland](#)

[Story Bridge to close all weekend for repairs, with Clem7 tolls waived](#)

[Bill Cosby found guilty of drugging, sexually assaulting woman](#)

Canberra Times

[Are you a northerner or a southerner at heart?](#)

[The ACT's highest-earners: who are they and where do they live?](#)

[Tax cuts for low and middle earners as budget takings soar, says Scott Morrison](#)

[ACT politician 'shocked' after volunteer arrested in drug bust](#)

[New type of poverty hurting middle class](#)