



FOREST PRACTICES AUTHORITY

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FPA BOARD MEETING COMMUNIQUE

15 March 2019

Forest Practices Code Review

The Board noted progress on the development of a revised draft Code. The current draft has been sent to STT, PFT and FPAC members for comment. The Code is currently scheduled to be released for public comment in the middle of this year.

Forest Practices Act – Proposed Amendments

The Board noted that the second reading in the House of Assembly of the Forest Practices Amendment Bill 2018 is scheduled for the 8 April sitting week.

Private Timber Reserves (PTRs)

The Board agreed to recommend to Her Excellency the Governor that six applications for PTRs be approved. The PTRs cover an area of approximately 950 ha. The Board also agreed to recommend to Her Excellency the Governor, the revocation of seven PTRs. The approximate area of revocation is 1107 ha. The predominant future use for land is pasture/agriculture.

2019 Bushfire Response

The CFPO has been in communication with affected parties. At this stage there is no immediate requirement on the FPA to take any action.

The CFPO advised the Board that any requests for reallocation of harvesting coupes or salvage logging in burnt areas would be responded to quickly by FPA staff. These matters can be dealt with under current provisions of the Forest Practices Code. The principle of providing reasonable protection to the environment while taking account of social and economic matters will prevail.

Any unusual circumstances will be brought to the Board for its consideration.

Swift Parrot Habitat

The Board received a briefing from Sustainable Timber Tasmania on matters associated with a draft Public Authority Management Agreement between DPIPW and STT for protection of swift parrot breeding habitat in the southern forests.

The Board sought further information on distribution of low and medium density foraging habitat in the southern forests.

The Board also considered information in relation to a study of socio-economic impacts of Swift Parrot management prescriptions and resolved to hold a special half-day meeting to discuss the matters raised.

Land clearing and conversion on King and Flinders Islands

The Board discussed its responsibilities with respect to any applications for clearing and conversion of native forest on King Island. The Board noted a survey of threatened bird species was imminent to determine their distribution and habitat preferences.

At a previous meeting the Board had resolved to consider applications for forest practices plans for clearing and conversion on offshore islands itself and had removed the delegation from FPOs (Planning) for that circumstance.

The Board confirmed its intention to consider all applications on their merits and in accordance with the 2017 Tasmanian Policy for Maintaining a Permanent Native Forest Estate. The Board noted that a key consideration will include decision making to achieve reasonable protection of the environment. Establishing what is likely to achieve reasonable protection for the environment will likely include understanding the existing level of native forest or native vegetation retention on the island, and recognition that offshore islands have biogeographic significance due to the ecological effects of isolation and an inherently greater risk from threatening processes.

Finance

The Board noted the monthly financial report and that the FPA continues to be in a sound financial position.

Next Meeting

The next FPA Board meeting is scheduled for Friday 12 April 2019.