

Monday, July 26th 2010

VicForests presents to community meeting

Nathan Trushell, VicForests' Director, Strategy and Corporate Affairs, was guest speaker at a community meeting in Warburton on Saturday, July 24th.

The meeting was held to discuss issues around native timber harvesting in Victoria's Central Highlands region.

"The meeting was a very good opportunity to present the timber industry's point of view on how timber is sustainably harvested from our native forests," Mr Trushell said.

"VicForests' staff are very passionate about the environment.

"This was a chance to showcase that passion and also highlight some of the positive work that has been done in recent times particularly in areas such as regenerating our forests after harvesting.

"VicForests very much appreciates the chance to speak to the community groups such as those at the weekend's meeting.

"Hopefully the presentation increased the community's knowledge of the native timber industry and encouraged those who attended to consider a range of perspectives in relation to this issue," he said.

Mr Trushell said VicForests recognises that native timber harvesting is a complex issue.

"It is important people think about the social and environmental consequences of a reduction in native timber harvesting.

"These include a loss of jobs in regional communities and the risk of an increase in imports of wood products, particularly from countries who do not have the same strict regulations around timber harvesting as we have in Victoria.

"VicForests' operations always focus on producing as much high quality timber as possible but those who oppose the native timber industry continue to push the line that our forests are being harvested for woodchips.

"The reality is that woodchips are a natural by-product of these harvesting operations and allow more timber to be utilised rather than simply left on the forest floor.

"The amount of native forest now being harvested each year in Victoria is approximately 5500 hectares. This level is very similar to area harvested by the native timber industry in the 1970s," he said.

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