

Thursday, December 8<sup>th</sup> 2010

## VicForests' program gives Panthers some bounce

The Wallan Panthers Basketball Club is one of fourteen community groups in the Central Highlands region to receive a grant as part of VicForests' Community Support Program.

Liz Langford, VicForests' Community Relationship Manager, Central Highlands, said there was a terrific response from the community to the program with grants provided totalling more than \$18 000.

"VicForests received more than 80 applications from a wide range of local groups including schools, sporting groups, local charities and events," Ms Langford said.

"Of these applications, 14 were successful in receiving grants of between \$500 and \$2000.

"The Wallan Panthers will use their grant to provide uniforms for both the club's male and female players.

"This includes players from a range of age groups starting at Under 12s level and going right through the different grades.

"The Wallan community is still very much recovering from the Black Saturday bushfire and we are very happy to support the local basketball club to provide a healthy social outlet for young people in the area," she said.

Ms Langford said VicForests' Community Support Program offered not-for-profit organisations the chance to access grants of up to \$2000 to undertake activities which enhance the community's quality of life.

"The Community Support Program allows VicForests to continue to build on the strong ties between our timber industry and the local community," she said.

"All grant applications were assessed by a selection panel against set criteria.

"These criteria included how the project would benefit the community, how it would assist VicForests to educate the community and how well the project fits in with VicForests' aims and corporate objectives.

"The native timber industry remains an important contributor to regional communities in Victoria, in particular those in the Central Highlands region.

"VicForests looks forward to keeping the community updated throughout the year regarding the progress of initiatives which have been assisted by the Community Support Program," Ms Langford said.

**Media Contact:** David Walsh

T: 03 9608 9562 M: 0409 571 580 E: david.walsh@vicforests.com.au W: www.vicforests.com.au