

Monday, February 22nd 2010

Important Regeneration Burns Planned for Central Highlands and West Gippsland Regions

VicForests and the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) will undertake a number of planned regeneration burns in the Central Highlands and West Gippsland regions in coming months.

VicForests Regional Manager – Central Highlands, Brad Winthrop, said the burns will begin in late February in areas affected by the Black Saturday bushfires.

“Regeneration burns are carried out annually to promote the establishment of young eucalypt seedlings following the harvesting process,” Mr Winthrop said.

“These burns play a crucial role in ensuring the sustainability of our forests by creating an environment which encourages the regrowth of trees native to the area.

“We are very conscious of the community’s sensitivity towards fire and want to ensure people are not alarmed by smoke they may see as a result of this process,” he said.

Mr Winthrop said VicForests has developed detailed burn plans in conjunction with DSE.

“All burns will be authorised by DSE prior to ignition and will be closely patrolled by crews on location,” he said.

“Milder weather and recent rainfall has given us the opportunity to begin our regeneration burning process earlier than in the last few years. However VicForests will continue to carefully monitor conditions before any burns commence.

“We would like to reassure the community that this process is part of the annual management plan for Victoria’s forests and will be monitored by trained staff throughout,” Mr Winthrop said.

More information about regeneration burns will be provided through local community forums.

Residents wanting more information can contact the Victorian Bushfire Information line on 1800 240 667 or go to www.dse.vic.gov.au and click on the Bushfire Information link.

Hearing impaired residents can also call 1800 122 969 for more details.

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