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TASMANIAN COMMUNITY FOREST AGREEMENT RESEARCH INTO ALTERNATIVES TO 1080

NEWSLETTER 5

December 2006

November in review

Following the release of the Strategic Plan at the end of October, the programs focus switched to implementing the Strategic Plan.

The Implementation Committee signed off on the proposed implementation model outlined in the November Newsletter on the 14th and the Project Manager has been implementing the strategy since then.

Project Officers

Two Project Officer (1080 Alternatives) positions were advertised in the Government Gazette on 22nd November and also in the Saturday editions of the major Tasmanian Newspapers on the 25th November.

The position descriptions can be viewed at:

<http://www.jobs.tas.gov.au/notices/index.php?type=vacancy&id=15191>.

These positions will be based in DPIW's Game Management Services Unit and will principally be working with private landowners demonstrating and trialing trapping, shooting and fencing activities outlined in the first two focus areas of the Strategic Plan.

Funding has also been allowed for any demonstration and extension work arising from research into chemical repellents.

Half a million dollars has been set aside for the direct costs of these staff for up to a three year period, with up to a further one million dollars allocated to finance specific demonstrations and research trials and communication

materials to enable the extension of information gained to other properties.

Grants Program

The Grants Program has now been approved and full details, including the application form, will be available from the Alternatives to 1080 page on the DAFF website: www.daff.gov.au/1080 from Saturday 2nd December.

In summary, up to two million dollars has been put aside for organisations and individuals to apply for funding for research or demonstration activities that contribute to the priority focus areas of the Alternatives to 1080 Strategic Plan.

A five-week submission period has been allowed for because of the Christmas Break. The first round closes at 5pm AEST on Wednesday 10 January. Subsequent rounds will be subject to sufficient remaining funds.

All applicants are strongly encouraged to discuss proposals with John Dawson, the Project Manager (1080 Alternatives), before making an application. He can be contacted on 03 6233 6728 or john.dawson@dpiw.tas.gov.au.

Tenders & Other Expenditure

Funds have also been set aside for activities such as a review of existing browsing controls, improvements in data collection and analysis to support wildlife management plans, development of communication products, demonstration days and project management overheads.

Final Funding Decisions

The final split up of funds between these three areas will be partially influenced by the grant applications received, with the potential of moving the allocation between the three pools.

What next?

It is expected that the Project Officers' interviews will occur in late December, and they will be on board towards the end of January. Given the initial round of grants close on 10 January 2007, the announcement of successful applicants should also be made around the end of January.

Wildlife Management Plans

Clause 41 of the TCFA noted, in part, that *"the wallaby management plans for Flinders and King Islands are currently being developed for public consultation prior to formal consideration by State and Commonwealth regulatory bodies in accordance with relevant legislation."*

As an update to this, Plans for Wallaby products from King and Flinders Islands for the period 2005 to 2010 were developed by the Department of Primary Industries and Water and approved by the Commonwealth Minister for the Department of Environment and Heritage (DEH) in December 2005.

The Commonwealth Minister's approval of the island plans was subsequently appealed to the Commonwealth Administrative Appeals Tribunal by the Queensland-based Wildlife Protection Association.

The Tribunal heard the appeal in Brisbane on 22-25 August 2006 and handed down its decision on the matter on 10 November 2006.

The decision dismissed the appeal and, subject to one amendment, upholds the Commonwealth Minister's approval of the plans.

Any questions or comments about the program should be directed to John Dawson, Project Manager 1080 Alternatives on 03 6233 6728 or john.dawson@dpiw.tas.gov.au. Any media enquires about the 1080 Alternatives Program should initially be directed to Shaun Rigby on 03 6233 2451 or shaun.rigby@dpac.tas.gov.au

Specifically:

1. The Tribunal was satisfied that the management plans promote the humane treatment of wallabies.

The Tribunal found that-

- Treatment of joeys resulted in a fast and humane death,
 - Young at foot are dealt with in a humane manner
 - Use of .22 rimfire rifles, when used according to the Tasmanian Wallaby Standard, have a humane outcome.
 - Accreditation of Game Meat Harvesters ensures that only proficient hunters are employed in the industry.
2. The Tribunal was satisfied that the plans provide sufficient safeguards to ensure the sustainability of the harvests. The Tribunal found that-
 - The method of monitoring the populations is adequate to assess the impact of harvesting and setting annual harvest quotas.
 - There was no evidence that the quota setting system is not sustainable.
 3. The Tribunal is nevertheless requiring that the sex and an estimate of age of harvested animals be recorded in an effort to monitor the impact harvesting on the structure of the population. DPIW is currently liaising with industry to determine the feasibility of implementing this requirement.