

Planning Guidelines for Apiary Values

May 2019



**Sustainable
Timber
Tasmania**

Document Summary

Document name	Planning Guidelines for Apiary Values
Version	
Owner	Engagement and Land Management
Author(s)	Dion McKenzie. Engagement and Land Management Manager
Release date	April 2019
Release status	Approved
Release approved by	Suzette Weeding, GM Land Management

Version Control

Version	Date	Author(s)	Summary of changes
1.0	31 May 2019	Dion McKenzie	Endorsed by the Tasmanian Beekeepers Association, removed draft watermark and updated links to reference documents.



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Introduction

Sustainable Timber Tasmania is a Government Business Enterprise that manages all Permanent Timber Production Zone (PTPZ) land in Tasmania. It is also required under legislation to undertake forest operations for the production and sale of forest products from these forests. Sustainable Timber Tasmania manages Tasmania's public production forests responsibly and professionally for the long term, and recognises that there are multiple uses of the forest.

Many beekeepers in Tasmania access hive sites on land managed by Sustainable Timber Tasmania. Many hive sites on PTPZ land are located near forests rich in leatherwood (*Eucryphia lucida*), which provides a source of nectar unique to Tasmania that is used to produce a significant proportion of Tasmania's honey. Other important sources of nectar include various eucalypts, 'manuka' (*Leptospermum* species), and understory species.

Sustainable Timber Tasmania acknowledges the contribution of the apiary industry to the Tasmanian economy through the sale of honey and associated products and the provision of pollination services to plant-based industries. Sustainable Timber Tasmania recognises that the provision of these pollination services is highly reliant upon the seasonal availability of forest based nectar sources.

This guideline replaces the 2000 *Community Forest Agreement* between Sustainable Timber Tasmania and the Tasmanian Beekeepers Association Inc and the 2000 guideline, known as the *Guidelines for Beekeeping on State Forest*.

This guideline should be read in conjunction with the *Tasmanian Apiary Management Guidelines for Public Land* that sets out the allocation and management of apiary sites on public land.

This guideline has been endorsed by the Tasmanian Beekeepers Association Inc in May 2019.

Purpose

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide principles that assist planners in the management of the apiary values across Tasmania's production forest landscapes.

Apiary Value Principles

Sustainable Timber Tasmania recognises commercial nectar resources as a special value that needs consideration and management when conducting harvesting, regeneration and fuel reduction operations.

It is the goal of the apiary industry to exclude all commercial nectar resources from impact by forestry operations. The apiary industry acknowledges that not all of the commercial nectar resource on PTPZ land can be retained.

Policy

In the context of the commercial nectar resource, and in particular the commercial leatherwood resource, two policy positions of Sustainable Timber Tasmania are relevant.

- Coupes Containing Old Growth (defined as coupes with greater than 25% by area of mapped old growth forest) will only be harvested by variable retention methods.



- The Landscape Context Planning System is applied to all native forest harvesting operations, this aims to further ensure the retention of mature forest elements in the landscape while limiting the concentration of harvesting in local landscapes

Strategic Planning

Apiary Special Management Zones

- Sustainable Timber Tasmania will identify and periodically review Apiary Special Management Zones within its Management Decision Classification system. These zones will be managed primarily for nectar production and must be within the foraging range of a viable hive site.
- Planning for wood production in these zones will give due consideration to the conservation of the nectar resource.

High Conservation Values Assessment and Management Plan

- All operations on PTPZ land will be conducted in accordance with Sustainable Timber Tasmania's High Conservation Values Assessment and Management Plan which recognises the commercial nectar resource as a high conservation value.

Three Year Wood Production Plan

- Sustainable Timber Tasmania will inform the apiary industry of its annual release of the Three Year Wood Production Plan via its public release and advertisement.
- Beekeepers are encouraged to contact the Engagement Team to register their interest in relation to any particular coupes, to advise of any issues of particular concern, or if they would like any further information and in particular to the identification and protection of commercial leatherwood.
- Sustainable Timber Tasmania will take any interest or information into account as site specific plans are prepared and keep beekeepers informed of progress.

Operational Planning

Forest Practices Plan preparation

If the Forest Practices Plan area includes a Special Management Zone for Apiary then the Forest Practices Plan must specify the prescriptions to manage the nectar resource.

All areas planned for harvest within three kilometres (typical foraging range for bees) of an apiary site must have any potential apiary impacts considered and documented during the planning process.

Forest Practices Plan preparers will issue a notice of intent for planning to any beekeeper that may be potentially affected by planned harvesting operations, with the aim of seeking their input into the planning process.

If commercial nectar resource (eg commercial leatherwood or manuka) is contained within the FPP area, then prescriptions must be included to take into account any potential impact on the resource.

In the preparation of Forest Practices Plans for timber harvesting, current and potential apiary resources in particular for leatherwood, must be considered by applying the following principles, where appropriate and as far as practicable:

1. Consideration of the surrounding context with regard to leatherwood patches beyond the provisional harvest boundary.
2. Locate harvest boundaries to exclude commercial leatherwood patches, or small (less than 0.5ha) leatherwood patches if adjacent and external to the harvest area and are contributing to nearby commercial leatherwood patches.



3. Wider streamside reserves should be considered as a means of protecting patches of commercial leatherwood.
4. All forest operations should be designed to minimise risk to the retained nectar resource.
5. Protect retained commercial leatherwood patches when conducting operations. Patches within the harvest area will be marked before operations commence, patches outside the harvest area will be marked if/where they adjoin the harvest area before operations commence.
6. When selectively harvesting (eg. Special timber management units, rainforest etc):
 - a. minimise any negative impact upon the leatherwood nectar resource;
 - b. retain leatherwood trees for regeneration;
 - c. monitor browsing of regeneration and control if necessary.
 - d. consider non-burning regeneration methods
7. Where existing nectar resources may be impacted, consideration will be given to re-establishing leatherwood during the re-establishment phase.

Fuel reduction burning

Manuka resources often occur on sites adjacent to or near button grass plains. Fuel reduction burns conducted on these areas should be scheduled at a frequency of no less than 10 years to maintain a viable manuka resource.

Potentially affected beekeepers will be notified of any planned fuel reduction burns by regional fire management staff to allow beekeepers to manage their hives effectively.

Consultation

Forest Practices Plan authors must consider the nectar resource in plan preparation and allow time for consultation with potentially impacted beekeepers or their representatives. Consultation with beekeepers will be conducted by the Forest Practices Plan author with the assistance of the regional Land Property Officers or Forest Managers in accordance with the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy.

Definitions

Commercial leatherwood

Patches greater than 0.5ha of leatherwood, *Eucryphia lucida*, that are capable of contributing to supporting a viable hive site where:

- any leatherwood stem is within 20m of three or more other leatherwood stems; or
- leatherwood trees comprise at least 25% of the forest canopy.

Three Year Wood Production Plan

This plan describes Sustainable Timber Tasmania's intent to harvest particular coupes within the next three years. It is finalised in early July each year and published on Sustainable Timber Tasmania's website along with an interactive map viewer to provide easily accessible information in-line with the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy.



References

Policies/Plans

[Stakeholder Engagement Operational Approach](#)

[Three Year Wood Production Plan](#)

[High Conservation Assessment and Management Plan](#)

Guidelines

[Tasmanian Apiary Management Guidelines for Public Land](#)

[MDC Manual](#)





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