

## Regenerating Victoria's Forests

Did you know that VicForests re-seeds and replants trees in all areas where harvesting takes place to ensure the forest grows back?

This work is part of VicForests' Regeneration Program and is crucial to sustaining our forests for future generations.

VicForests completed its largest ever aerial seeding program in 2010 to re-establish the forest in areas which have previously been harvested, including work in the forests affected by the 2009 bushfires.

### How does this process work?

The regeneration of our forests is a detailed process which can take more than three years to complete successfully.

Following harvesting operations, VicForests' trained staff prepare a suitable seed bed on the ground.

Because Victoria's *Eucalypt* forests regenerate naturally by fire,

this work often includes a controlled regeneration burn to closely replicate the natural process.

Seeds are then spread across the prepared areas either by seed trees left during harvesting, or via helicopter. The seeds used are sourced from local regions to ensure the trees which grow back match the mix of species that existed on the site prior to harvesting.

Following seeding, VicForests actively monitors these areas to ensure regeneration is occurring.

When VicForests' monitoring indicates the regeneration process has been successful, the areas are audited by the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE).

Once DSE's auditing confirms this regeneration has been a success, they assume responsibility for the ongoing management of the area.

More than 5500 hectares of forest was handed back to DSE in 2010 after being successfully regenerated by VicForests.



### Seed collection

VicForests holds Victoria's largest store of *Eucalyptus* seeds. It works with seed collectors from regional communities throughout the year to source these seeds from regions where timber harvesting takes place.

These seeds are generally collected by climbing live trees and pruning branches containing productive seeds crops.

The seeds are then extracted by using a specialised seed extraction kiln and stored in a climate controlled storeroom.

Once extracted, the seeds are used to re-grow trees in areas which have been harvested.

VicForests has taken advantage of bumper seed crops in the last 18 months to stockpile *Eucalypt* seeds for use in future regeneration programs.

### Example of a Regenerated Coupe

The Granite Flat Spur area was harvested in 2003. These photos (right) show how the forest regenerates over time following harvesting<sup>1</sup>.

This type of forest regeneration occurs following all VicForests' harvesting operations.

### The 2010 Regeneration Program

In 2010, VicForests completed its largest ever aerial seeding program to regrow forests across Victoria.

Close to one billion *Eucalyptus* seeds were spread by helicopter as part of this program.

The spreading of seeds by helicopter is a specialised operation which utilises modern equipment and satellite guidance systems to ensure the seeds are evenly dispersed across each hectare.

VicForests invests more than \$6 million into this program each year.

The 2010 Regeneration Program also included the hand planting of almost 500 000 seedlings across Gippsland.

VicForests' 2011 Regeneration Program is underway and will re-establish the forest in harvested areas throughout eastern Victoria.

<sup>1</sup> The harvesting and regeneration of this area was conducted by VicForests' predecessor (as VicForests was not formed until 2004). These images are included to show the type of regeneration which occurs following all VicForests' harvesting operations.

### Granite Flat Spur



November '03



November '05



November '09