

## **Willmott Forests Fire Update**

**Wednesday 11 February 2009**

There are two major fire complexes of concern to Willmott Forests' plantations within Victoria at present.

The first is known as the Churchill Jeeralong Complex (Glendonald Road) fire in Gippsland. The second is the Beechworth Complex (Library Road). Both fires are yet to be fully contained but assessment of the most recent fire maps indicates fire conditions are easing throughout the complexes.

Firefighters from the Country Fire Authority (CFA), Department of Sustainability & Environment (DSE), Parks Victoria, Hancock Victorian Plantations (HVP) and other interstate agencies, continue to do all within their power to contain these blazes. Weather conditions remain favorable and are greatly assisting firefighters to minimise any further damage. These favorable conditions are expected to remain for much of this week with warmer conditions returning later in the week.

The overall size of the Beechworth Complex fire is still to be ascertained however, fireline reports indicate a total of approximately 400 hectares of young Willmott Forests plantations aged between 6 months and 3 years are located within the perimeter of the burnt area from the weekend fires.

This follows on from 152.9 hectares of young plantation (aged less than 2 years) that was damaged in the previous week's fires in the Churchill Jeeralong Complex, Gippsland.

The combined area of approximately 553 hectares represents approximately 1% of Willmott Forests' plantations under management and no further plantations are currently under threat.

In addition to these major complexes, Willmott Forests' staff in the Murray Valley region of New South Wales has worked through the night at a small fire (15 hectares) burning in difficult terrain approximately 5km's south of a young plantation. This fire is believed to now be contained.

In the Bombala region of NSW, Willmott Forests' staff has also attended a number of small fires over the previous 2 days. All have been quickly contained and not posed a threat to Willmott Forests' plantations in that area.

Willmott Forests' senior forestry staff intend to inspect the damaged Victorian areas over the course of the next two weeks in order to assess the full extent of the damage incurred. Further updates will be provided after this assessment.

For further information please refer to the following web sites:

**Department of Sustainability & Environment (DSE):**

<http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/DSE/nrenfoe.nsf/LinkView/519C51D981DAE41FCA257257000A5163E2ACC26BB87D6BFC4A2567CB000DB12D>

**Country Fire Authority (CFA):**

[http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/incidents/incident\\_summary.htm](http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/incidents/incident_summary.htm)

**For previous Fire Updates, please visit the News Page on the Willmott Forests' website.**