Harvesting & Regenerating State Forests

Aggregated Retention

In wet eucalypt forests, some alternatives to clearfelling are being trialled. These include the strategy called 'aggregated retention harvesting', in which clumps of forest are retained in the wider harvested area. This technique can be used to protect habitat for native fauna or to preserve aesthetic values of the forest.

Aggregated retention is used to change the ecology of the regenerating stand. Forest that is retained close to the harvested area influences the regenerating forest. It provides seeds, spores, bugs and beetles to increase the rate at which the harvested forest recovers to a pre-disturbance state. The retained patches are also 'lifeboats' – they carry later-successional species into the new forest, as well as providing habitat and structural diversity. In this way a regenerated aggregated retention stand is biologically very different to a clearfelled burnt and sown stand.

Harvesting the Timber

In Tasmanian forests, most trees are felled by skilled chainsaw operators. The fallen trees are trimmed and moved along 'snig tracks' to a landing by machines called skidders. Excavators on the landing usually de-bark the logs and load them onto log trucks. Bark can be spread on the surface of the tracks and landings to protect the soil from compaction by machinery.

On steep slopes, cable systems are used to transport the logs.

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The stories behind our trees

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