



tasmanian conservation trust inc

Letter to the editor
The Advocate

2 December 2011

VDL dairy expansion

In the article 'VDL hopes for new dairy farm' (Advocate 29 November 2011) VDL company Chief Executive Michael Guerin was reported as stating that "the new farm would be developed on existing cleared farming land used for cattle grazing".

Mr Guerin did not rule out further dairy expansion involving clearing of native forest or other native vegetation. The TCT has been informed that VDL wishes to seek state government approval to clear at least 2500 hectares of native vegetation at its Woolnorth and nearby properties. The Woolnorth property is known to have extensive tracts of threatened forest communities and habitats for threatened species such as the Tasmanian devil, Tiger quoll and freshwater crayfish. If these important areas were cleared it would be environmental vandalism and potentially damaging to the VDL brand and the Tasmanian dairy industry generally.

If such a proposal was approved it would have another social and economic impact. Broad-scale clearing on private land in Tasmania must stop either on 1 January 2015 or when total statewide forest cover is reduced by a further 9,211 hectares - whichever occurs first (Forest Practices Authority figures, 1 July 2011). So if VDL gets approval to clear a large area then this means less available for other land owners.

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