

QUOKKA HABITAT CLEARFELLED MAY 2011



Even though the department was aware that Crowea forest near Pemberton was home to a colony of endangered Quokkas, they approved clearfelling there this month (May 2011). The clearfelling occurred only 600m from the Warren River and destroyed a mixed Karri Jarrah forest ecosystem that was providing habitat and refuge to many species of flora and fauna unique to the south west and struggling to survive.

The Quokka is one of the forest dependent species listed as rare or likely to become extinct under the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950*.

DEC has a draft recovery plan for the Quokka but no one has the power to force DEC or the FPC to protect this endangered species unique to the south west.

DEC don't know how many Quokkas are still alive in the southern forests but a study done in 2003 found that "The total adult Quokka population in the Northern and Central Jarrah forest may be as few as 150 individuals (Hayward et al. 2003) and in 2007 DEC published a finding that "At three of the Northern Jarrah forest locations, the Quokka is presumed to be locally extinct, and is probably in decline and threatened with localised extinctions at other locations."

Logging is one of the major threats to Quokka's survival. The loss and fragmentation of habitat has an immediate effect, killing individuals and reducing habitat availability for others, and following logging fox predation increases.

This is another indication of the fact that all is not well in our forests. Logging and clearing of the remaining native forests must stop urgently so that these and other species unique to the south west have a chance to recover and survive.



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