



The
Van Diemen's
Land Company

Founded 1825 by Royal Charter of King George IV
ARBN 16 009 475 601

MEDIA RELEASE

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VDL to Protect 70 Per Cent of Woolnorth's Native Vegetation

The Van Diemen's Land Co is proposing to protect more than 70 per cent of native vegetation on Woolnorth in formal and informal reserves.

The VDL Co today publicly released the detailed draft referral document of the assessment made by the company of the likely impacts on Matters of National Environmental Significance.

VDL Chief Executive Mr Michael Guerin said today the draft referral –known as an EPBC submission - was made to the Federal Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities last week.

He said it followed detailed consultation, ecological and vegetation studies over the past three years to assess best balance between further clearing, pasture development and retention of native vegetation on the Woolnorth Properties.

“The submission proposes that VDL clear 1818 hectares of native vegetation on the Woolnorth farm for the dairy conversion and expansion plan,” Mr Guerin said.

“We will formally protect 3421 hectares of native vegetation and voluntarily protect a further 876 hectares. That means a total of 4297 hectares, or just over 70% of the native vegetation on the Woolnorth properties, will be protected,” Mr Guerin said.

“A strong focus of our work has been the sustainable management of the Tasmanian devil population that has grown and thrived on the Woolnorth farm.

The EPBC submission includes a detailed assessment of all flora and fauna on the property including analysis of the number of devils on Woolnorth, their behavior, hunting and denning requirements.

It proposes a range of other measures to help protect the Tasmanian devil and other species as well as vegetation.

“The Company has been working for more than five years with the Save the Devil Program including the possible construction of a devil proof fence to prevent the spread of the Devil Facial Tumour Disease to Woolnorth.

“VDL has a long history and embraces that heritage. We want to create a modern efficient dairy farm development with a strong positive brand. We have arguably the biggest and healthiest devils in Tasmania right here on the property and we're confident that the Devils and farming can coexist.

Mr Guerin said the VDL Co has been working with key stakeholders for more than 18 months and would continue that dialogue.

He said VDL was in final discussions with several parties to raise additional equity for the dairy conversion and expansion plan.

In total VDLC expansion plans include the enlarging of 11 of the 12 existing dairy units, the development of three new dairy units on current beef operations, the development of six new dairy units on existing Heifer operations and the development of two new dairy units from land subject to clearance.

This will achieve a final make up for the historic Woolnorth property of 23 dairy farms.

Mr Guerin said the dairy expansion would bring investment to the local community and create local jobs and opportunities, both for contractors during the farm development and building stages and in the operation of dairies and heifer breeding programs.

For further information please contact: Michael Lester, M&M on 6224 8644 or 0425 235 157.

BACKGROUND

The Van Diemen's Land Company (VDL) is the largest dairy farming operation in Australia, and one of the largest dairy operations in the world.

VDL was established by Royal Charter in Tasmania in 1825 by King George IV and is believed to be the only Royal Charter Company still operating on part of its original land grant.

It currently has 24 farms located in northwest Tasmania, including the historic Woolnorth property. In 2011, the dairy operation produced over 5 million kilograms of milk solids.

VDL is focused on providing sustainable improvements in environmental practices, animal welfare, productivity and profitability in the future.