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Industry is Crucial

By Scott Gentle

Of the 15,000ha of forest in the Yarra tributaries, only 60-70ha is harvested each year.

Of the 50,000h in the Thompson catchment, only 12,000ha is available for harvesting of which a maximum of 150ha is harvested on an annual basis.

The quality timber from this forest is the lifeblood for many regional towns. To end harvesting would result in the closure of sawmills and job losses.

Tim timber workers who make up these communities are quite often the backbone of local CFAs. If their jobs go, so will they.

Harvesting contractors, like their CFA counterparts, also provide expertise in fire fighting. Their machinery has been the difference between a small forest fire and a major wildfire.

The timber industry has provided the road network that allows better access to fires. They are the ones protecting our catchments from fire.

It would be a cruel twist of fate if the forests that environmentalists had believed they were savings, burnt, because the machinery and people had gone.