Wombat Forest Society Milestones

1994

- 23 May 1994

Wombat Forest Society formed as an incorporated body

- 15 July 1994

Wombat Forest Society members address the Midlands Forest Management Area Advisory Committee (AAC) chaired by Martin Westbrooke.

- September 1994

Commission Landsat Image that proves that Wombat Forest is being logged unsustainably.

- October 1994

Shelterwood Harvesting Review released by DCNR.

- November 1994

Lobby in Canberra- show video of sawlogs being turned into woodchips by Midways.

- December 1994

Federal Government (via David Bedall) announces EIS for Wombat

1995

- February, 1995- Prime Minister Keating announces Regional Forest Agreements
- 20 February, 1995- Wombat Forest Society sponsor Lyonville woodchopping event
- 5 March 1995- WFS Bus Tour –leaving from Kingston
- 27 March 1995- WFS 'Powerful Owl' t-shirts and windcheaters sold to public
- Draft Midlands FMA Forest Management Plan released.
- 16 May 1995- WFS holds its first AGM
- Wombat Forest Society convinces Federal Government to stop export woodchipping from Wombat
- WFS apply to AHC to nominates a National Estate Listing of Mineral Springs and Recharge Areas.
- 25 July 1995- WFS opens office @ Daylesford Neighbourhood House
- 29 July 1995- WFS Theatre Night, 'Bastard From The Bush' held at Daylesford Town Hall
- July 1995- Lederderg Report is released without any peer review. Dean Haywood asked to critique report
- 30 July 1995- WFS Bus Tour

- 11 August 1995- WFS joins Evironmental Defenders Office (EDO)
- 14 August 1995- WFS Bus Tour
- August 1995- Foreplay Review released by Professor Brian Turner, Australian National University (ANU)
- 20 August, 1995- WFS receives grant from National Parks Association of Victoria
- WFS members Helen Morningstar & Monty Kirby commissioned to undertake environmental studies.
- September 1995- Draft Deferred Forest Agreement (DFA) released
- September 1995- Review of the Code of Forest Practices for Timber Production is released
- WFS notified that it will not be getting an EIS
- Barry Traill commissioned by WFS to do Fauna study
- Lincoln Kern commissioned by WFS to Flora study
- WFS initiates New Wok Opportunity Scheme application process, bringing Local Government, union, timber industry and other stakeholders together
- 4 October 1995- WFS makes $200 donation to Friends of the Earth (FOE), Melbourne for Forest Bulletin Co-ordinator.
- 16 October 1995- Dean Haywood releases report criticizing the Lerdederg Report
- October 1995- DFA briefing in Canberra.

WFS member Alan Gray, whilst representing Environment Victoria, he breaks WFS committee instructions. Together with Alec Marr (The Wilderness Society) undertake a verbally aggressive approach bringing AHC chair Anne Marie Delahunt to tears, destroying any chance of National Estate listing and other initiatives.

- October 1995- State Deferred Forest Agreement (DFA), showing Commonwealth EPA and ANCA representatives WFS research. They comment that the material is adequate evidence for EIS. Also detail Alan Gray's inappropriate behaviour at RFA briefing in Canberra.
- November 1995- WFS splits internally. Breakaway group members, Tim Anderson and Loris Duclos, lobby Canberra including 19 meetings in 2 days
- November 1995- WFS splinter group involved in negotiations with the Federal Government. Federal Government only wants to cancel half of the Midways woodchipping licence. Direct phone conversations from Caucus ensures full cancellation
- 16 November 1995- WFS receive Plantations Report I & II from Environment Victoria
- 21 November 1995- WFS Bus Tour
- November 1995- Midways woodchipping expelled from the Wombat Forest

- December 1995- Draft Midlands FMA Plan released for three month public comment.

- December 1995- Barry Traill and Lincoln Kern release fauna & flora studies to WFS

1996

- January 1996- DCNR launches the Draft Midland Forest Management Plan and sustainable yield figures at Central Highlands Water, Ballarat.

- January 1996- Alan Gray resigns as WFS president.

Robin Ramsay takes over as president of the Wombat Forest Society

- January 1996- Alan Gray announces his candidacy as an independent Green in the Federal election.

- January 1996- Hepburn Shire Council joins Timber Towns Association, Victoria

- February 1996- Industry releases the Jack Opie Report on the value of the timber industry in the Midlands Forest Management Area, launched by Noel Harvey, Hepburn Shire Commissioner.

- 22 February, 1996- WFS purchases banner for public events

- 24 March 1996- WFS holds 1st Forest Forum in Daylesford Town Hall.

One day forum brings together conservationists, politicians, timber workers, sawmillers, field naturalists, union, local community, scientists, foresters and academics. Information presented relating to the Midlands FMA Plan. Petition put forward requesting extension of closure date. DNRE extends closing date by 2 weeks.

- 1 April 1996- WFS receives confirmation on nomination of listing of Mineral Springs recharge area on National Estate Listing.

- 16 April 1996- WFS makes substantial submission to Midlands FMA.

Over 50 other submissions made.

- April 1996- Kennett Government is re-elected in the Victorian State elections.

Ms Marie Tehan is appointed as junior Minister for DNCR

- April 1996- Unions campaign over the re-instatement of the Midways woodchip licence

- April 1996- DCNR releases Midlands Sustainable Yield Review.

WFS meets with Bruce Kilgour over modeling for sustainable yield.
WFS disputes projected yields and growth rate assumptions.

- April 1996- WFS campaigns against Forest Museum in old Daylesford Fire Station.

Forest Centre Plan for the unused Daylesford CFA Building put forward by a number of Victoria Association of Forest Industry members and supported by Noel Harvey, Commissioner Hepburn Shire.
Loris Duclos attends public briefing @ Daylesford Town Hall, chaired by Mr Harvey and attended by timber industry representatives and Historical Society members.

- 13 May 1996- WFS undertakes investigation of the timber related companies through the Australian Securities Commission including Central Victorian Forestry Company Pty Ltd, Black Forest Timbers Pty

Ltd, Midways Wood Products Pty Ltd and others.

- June 1996- Newly elected Howard Government elected re-instates export woodchipping in the Wombat Forest.

- WFS calls for the resignation of NRE Director of Forest Services Richard Rawson.

1997

- DCNR releases Midlands Sustainable Yield Review, reduces sustainable yield from 72 000m3/pa sawlogs down to 58 000 m3/pa sawlogs.

- WFS commences detailed analysis of new NRE figures- commence development of Wombat Forest Model

- WFS establishes the Western Regional Environment Centre (WREC) in Daylesford to provide accessible local community resource and involvement, meeting space, library and office support structure.

1998

- WFS facilitates the formation and ongoing administrative support of the Western Victorian Forest Protection Network, involving 23 community stakeholder groups in the West Victorian Regional Forest Agreement area.

- WFS participate in the 'Voices of the Catchment' Regional Conference held by the North Central Catchment Management Authority

- Wombat Forest Society and local timber industry co-sign serious letter of complaint to NRE Minister Marie Tehan, regarding mis-management of Midlands/Wombat in Daylesford Town Hall (Witnessed by Robert Hill- Federal Environment Minister)

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- WFS establish a shopfront Western Region Environment Centre (WREC) in Daylesford to provide accessible local community resource and involvement, meeting space and support structure.

1999

- WFS plays significant community role in the West Victorian Regional Forest Agreement, holding local public meetings, establishing library resource and community workshops in Daylesford, Bullarto, Blackwood and Napoleons.

- WFS sets up office and meeting facility at the Powerhouse Art Space, Daylesford.

- WFS continues involvement with the West Victorian Forest Protection Network facilitating meeting of community groups and other non-timber stakeholders with State and Federal Government representatives in Ballarat and ongoing meetings of network groups in Avoca, Stawell, Camperdown, Halls Gap and Geelong.

- WFS Midlands Sustainable Yield Critique- proves NRE logging levels are unsustainable.

- WFS participate in the Wombat Forest Field Day held at Bullarto.

- WFS successfully lobby Federal Government politicians and bureaucrats regarding unsustainable logging in the Wombat Forest.

- Wilson Tuckey, Federal Environment Minister, commissions Prof. Brian Turner and Prof. Ian Ferguson to compare Wombat Forest Society/Anderson Report vs. NRE's modelling.

- WFS successfully lobby for an extension to the West Victorian Regional Forest Agreement timeframe.
- WFS hold local community Wombat Forest tours
- WFS participate in meeting held by World Wildlife for Nature investigating Forest Stewardship possibilities in the Wombat Forest.

2000

- WFS continue to provide community input into the West Victorian RFA, holding various community meetings and providing local support.
- WFS join Earthworker, a Trades Hall initiative focusing on building positive relationships between Environment Groups and Trade Unions.
- WFS attend National Forest Summit in Moruya, N.S.W.
- WFS facilitate meeting of West Victorian Forest Protection Network groups with Minister of Natural Resources, Sherryl Garbutt.
- West RFA signed- announcing sawlog reduction from 58 000m3/pa to 40 000m3 pa.
- WFS hold local community Wombat Forest tours and market stalls
- WFS participate in Creswick Landfest
- WFS participate & facilitate community meeting re: globalisation issues with guest speakers from the anti WTO activist Serena O'Meley and Friends Of Earth Melbourne, Tristy Fairfield.
- AGM held at Powerhouse Art Space with guest speaker, Plantations Activist Anthony Amis.
- WFS facilitate & liaise local community involvement at the 'Green Cell' in the World Economic Forum protest action at the Crown Casino, Melbourne.
- WFS representative hold meeting with workers and management at the Daylesford Sawmill regarding the upcoming closure of their operation
- WFS successfully hold first direct action in the Wombat Forest at Bullarto
- Daylesford Sawmill closes & WFS lobbies State Government, Hepburn Shire and CMFEU to find real jobs for 50 displaced workers.
- Pritchard Logging Contractors take up post RFA package for workers & management

2001

- WFS finalised an updated Coupe Harvesting Audit of every FMA in the State for the past 12 years.

- WFS meet with the Premier Mr Bracks, Minister for Conservation and Forests Mrs Garbutt, Gisborne MLA Joanne Duncan, MLC Ballarat Province John McQuilten, NRE Director of Forest Services Ken King and the Head Of Public Services at the Community Cabinet meeting in Gisborne regarding sustainability and local water issues including the Mineral Springs.

- WFS facilitate the National Forest Summit at Continental House, Hepburn Springs.

- WFS participate on the Victorian Plantation Management Statement Steering Committee with other forest interest groups from across the State as well as National Groups to discuss plantation management and formulise a set of environmental standards for plantations, agro-forestry and other private timber holdings.

- Corrigans Sawmil, Ballarat closes & workers provided RFA readjustment package.

- The WFS are participants on the West RFA Private Forestry Steering Committee.

- WFS participate in the Midlands Regional Forest Reference Group

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- AGM held at Daylesford Neighbourhood House with guest speaker well renowned Permaculturist David Holmgren, talking about Community Management possibilities for the Wombat Forest.

- WFS run a Community Education Camp at Nolan's Crossing Camping Area.

- WFS hold various community bus tours

- WFS supportive of Tony Locke's 'Shared Vision' concert and other activities.

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- WFS hold major raffle of Powerful Owl linocut by member and acclaimed wildlife artist, Rob Mancini

2002

- WFS hold 'Camp Out' at Nolans Creek Camping Ground

- WFS and other community members successfully negotiate to have the logging application on the Lerderderg coupe changed to selection felling and 100 metre SPZ applied to Lerderderg River.

- WFS make extensive submission to the Wood Utilisation Plan 2002-3.

- NRE announce that the Wood Utilisation Plan 2002-3 will provide water catchment protection to 1/3 of the logging area due to Wombat Forest Society lobbying.