

MEDIA RELEASE: FOREST CARBON STUDY WELCOMED AND VOLUNTEER CONTRIBUTION RECOGNISED. THE WILDERNESS SOCIETY 06.09.2012

The Wilderness Society today welcomed the Tasmanian Government's Forest Carbon Study and its findings that the carbon stores in Tasmania's public forests are both significant and that their protection would deliver immediate benefits in the fight against climate change and potential economic benefit.

Wilderness Society Tasmanian Campaign Manager Vica Bayley also paid tribute to the hundreds of volunteers who had participated in its citizen science project that undertook thousands of on-the-ground measurements in threatened forests around the state. The data from this project was fed into the Forest Carbon Study and helped to inform the findings.

"This study is a welcome look into the carbon value in our forests and how various management options will influence carbon storage and Tasmania's contribution to the fight against climate change," said Mr Bayley.

"It reinforces previous science that protecting forests from logging will secure important carbon stores and can present important economic opportunities for Tasmania.

"This report can help the Tasmanian Government understand emerging opportunities and the policy settings required to fully realise these opportunities for the Tasmanian community. Simple policy changes can significantly increase financial benefits, over and above those outlined in the report."

The Wilderness Society's Community Carbon Accounting Project has been running for over three years and measured the carbon storage in coupes scheduled for logging in forest areas around the state, including the Tarkine, Blue Tier, Upper Florentine and the Styx Valley.

"Not only did this citizen science project get hundreds of people out into the forests to experience them first hand, but it collected important raw data that was processed, interpreted and ultimately published in a scientific journal," said Mr Bayley.

"It is fantastic that volunteer work has helped inform the Forest Carbon Study and a testament to citizen science and the importance of volunteers working to improve our knowledge of key issues and helping to address them."

The Tasmanian Government report can be found at:
http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/climatechange/what_the_government_is_doing/forest_carbon_study

For more information, please contact:
Campaign Coordinator
The Wilderness Society Victoria Inc
288 Brunswick St
Fitzroy, Vic, 3065
Phone: 03 9038 0888