

WTO Proposal

Xanthorrhoea Semiplana SPP Tateana.

Yacca Gum

Updated submission for renewal, dated 20 March 2023.

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1. Title and introduction

1.1 Scientific name(s)

Xanthorrhoea Semiplana SPP Tateana.

1.2 Common name

Yacca Gum.

1.3 Location of harvest

Kangaroo Island, South Australia.

1.4 Description of what is being harvested

Dead Xanthorrhoea Semiplana SPP Tateana single plant stumps/trunks (no twins, bunches or clutches).

1.5 Species protection

For dead plant stumps/trunks, there is no special protection under State or Federal legislation to our knowledge.

Because they are dead stumps/trunks, they will not be taken in contravention of the national Parks and Wildlife Act 1972 or the Native Vegetation Management Act 1991.

2. Statement of general goals/aims

The objective is to collect single dead Yacca Gum plant stumps/trunks from privately owned properties. Once collected, these dead plant stumps/trunks will then be processed into a coarse grade material for bagging and export.

This business has a long history, and we were very pleased to re-establish the permit 3 years ago. While we have been able to conclude some export shipments, the Island has been devastated initially with fires, and then hit hard with the COVID pandemic.

Hopefully, we have more stable conditions over the next 3-year period to continue building this business with our long-standing customer, who has been extremely supportive during these difficult times. We also continue to receive enquiries from other customers and hope to be in a position shortly to supply them as well.

3. Harvest Details

3.1 Area

Private properties located on Kangaroo Island.

It is difficult to provide harvest maps at this stage, as it is a continual process to locate new privately owned properties with dead yacca and gain owner consent to harvest the trunks/stumps. However, we are nominating the property locations with our annual harvest reporting requirement.

3.2 Land Ownership

All properties are privately owned.

3.3 Harvest Quantity

Target requirement will slightly increase to 50-80 metric tonnes of coarse granules Yacca Gum, pending stable conditions.

We are providing these details with our annual reporting requirement but similar to question 1, it is difficult to nominate this information prior to the properties being inspected and dead yacca trunks/stumps identified. The amount harvested could vary, depending on what is actually found on each site. Normally most of the yacca inspected is dry enough and has been dead long enough to harvest but if the stumps/trunks are within the 1-3 year range following their death, then we will return in another year or two to collect.

The number of collected yacca stumps/trunks required for a tonne of Yacca gum would vary a lot depending on size and how long the Yacca plant has been dead. Once the Yacca plant has been dead for three or more years then they become more and more brittle with each year that passes. This means they slowly fall apart from disturbances such as animals brushing against them or the weather etc. Therefore, a lot of Yacca collected these days can be less than half their original height as the rest of the trunk has disintegrated. As the size and height of the yacca stumps/trunks varies greatly, they may yield from as little as 2kg and up to 20kgs per stump/trunk.

3.4 Methods of Harvesting

Dead yacca stumps/trunks are picked by hand, loaded onto vehicles for removal from the harvest site and then transported to where a stationary milling machine is located. The red yacca gum is then milled out of the dead yacca stumps/trunks and collected in bags ready for transportation. The mill is currently located at Lots 110 & 111 HD Seddon property.

A thorough inspection is undertaken when the dead yacca trunks/stumps have been identified and the property owner consent has been granted. Typically, when yacca dies it takes 2-3 years for it to be soft and dry enough to harvest for milling. It is not possible to harvest/mill live green yacca trunks/stumps, so there is no reason to be harvesting anything other than dead yacca trunks/stumps.

3.5 Timeframe of Harvesting

Harvesting is in summer and autumn each year when the dead yacca stumps/trunks are dry, so they can be milled to remove the red yacca gum.

4. Impact of Harvest

There will be no impact on any other Yacca plants/species nor the ecosystem now and into the future, as only dead stumps/trunks Yacca plants are collected by hand.

We believe there is no impact from the harvest on the environment, ecosystem, landscape or the living Yacca plants and this is a manual process. Only the dead yacca stumps/trunks are collected by hand and carried by hand in tubs or wheelbarrows along existing animal paths and loaded onto a vehicle parked on the edge of the paddock, next to the scrub/vegetation line. This also means that the collection is limited to easy walking access areas and the distance you are willing to carry loaded tubs back.

Because of the nature of the yacca stumps/trunk becoming brittle after a few years and slowly falling apart, they do not make a good long-term home for any animal species. Therefore, harvesting the dead yacca stumps/trunks is not taking an important home away from any animal or insect species. Over the many years of dead yacca collecting we have only found short-term opportunistic type animals/insects like mice, ants, spiders and the odd bee hive, and for obvious reasons it's best to keep well away from bee hives.

5. Monitoring and Assessment

Against each order an application for consent to export will be requested via the department's Wildlife's trade permits online services. Following the export of product, the export permit will be acquitted through the same online service.

Each year, we will submit an annual report to the department which will outline each property the dead yacca stumps/trunks were harvested from, the period/date of collection and volume.

6. Management strategies

We do not expect to detect any population changes from this activity, as only dead Yacca Gum plant stumps/trunks are sourced.

7. Compliance

We will continue to adhere to the special requirements laid out with our proposal application/approval, with regarding to harvesting, monitoring and reporting. All activities conducted will be in alignment with the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water's requests.

We will also act responsibly and in accordance with the Kangaroo Island Community Recovery Plan 2020-2022.