

Alexandra Jones
(address removed)

17/07/2006
The Legislative Council
Parliament House
Perth WA 6000

Dear Member of the Legislative Council,

The attached petition has been in circulation for some weeks and appears to be receiving considerable support from the community.

I hope that you will find the time to read the petition and to consider the issues that have led us to take this action.

Save Our Trees is a group of people from various suburbs who have been communicating our shared concerns about the impact of current tree "management " practices in urban areas.

We believe that tree removal and replacement policies by both local and state authorities are misguided and have led to the unnecessary loss of countless trees over past and recent years.

Over the years many members of the public have attempted to dissuade these authorities by contacting them directly or by writing to their local newspaper. Unfortunately, this has generally been unsuccessful and the practice of tree removal is proceeding at an alarming rate.

We are seeing this in local government under tree removal or replacement policies as well as in state authorities such as Kings Park with its policy of removing non-indigenous trees, such as gum trees native to the Eastern States. Many large trees have been removed from the park.

Added to this is the loss of mature trees due to development. Some of these trees are removed with the approval of the relevant local government, whilst others simply die or are severely damaged due to the development. This is a loss to the community from both an aesthetic and an environmental health perspective.

In view of the dire state of our local climate and water supply, trees must be protected because they are an integral part of that climate. They are part of a healthy energy budget with their deep roots helping to prevent salinity and their canopies providing the transpiration necessary for putting moisture back into the air.

There is plenty of evidence globally that large-scale tree removal creates deserts, alters climate and destabilizes soil, often leading to landslide.

The Australian Greenhouse Office has provided guidance to local governments on its web page. http://www.greenhouse.gov.au/land/vegetation/pubs/local_govt/index.html
This site indicates that mature trees sequester far more carbon dioxide than saplings. This information reinforces the need to protect mature trees and to focus on tree planting and establishment rather than concurrent removal and replacement. The advice to local government was released in September 2001, and yet in 2006 there appears to be no movement towards implementing much of the advice contained within this document.

The Sacramento Municipal Utility District's "SMUD-Tree Benefits" web-site <http://usage.smud.org/treebenefit/calculate.asp> has detailed calculations showing the CO2

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sequestration by trees at various stages of their development. This website provides a variety of information regarding trees in urban areas however it specifically calculates the pounds (lbs) of CO2 sequestered by trees annually. Calculations on this website indicate that young trees sequester far less carbon than older trees. Figures calculated on this website are included as a table attached at the end of this document. These figures demonstrate that even as older trees begin to slow in their rate of carbon sequestration, a 30-year-old London Plane Tree sequesters more than 35 times the carbon of a two-year-old London Plane Tree.

Tree management policies must maintain mature trees until replacement trees are mature enough to have a significant environmental benefit. This is not the current practice where very big mature trees are generally replaced with small saplings.

Mature trees also provide a home to thousands of insects and birds, and contribute greatly to the amenity of our suburbs and to our wellbeing.

We know that our continent has lost millions of trees due to human activity and we know that this has contributed greatly to our environmental problems such as salinity.

It is not acceptable that in the 21st century our authorities should continue on this path of mature tree removal. These current practices display a general lack of accountability.

Local and state authorities must consider the combined and cumulative effects of tree removal. Our enquiries suggest that there is no authority supervising overall urban tree removal and that there is no data relating to this.

Individual local governments and the state Department of Environment, when contacted, stated that they did not have such information. Nor was the Australian Bureau of Statistics able to assist.

It is a situation that cannot be allowed to continue and we would appreciate your assistance in helping to present this petition to the Legislative Council.

Yours sincerely,

Alex Jones

Save Our Trees

Promoter: Petition for the Protection of Mature Trees on Public Land in Urban Areas

Information sourced from <http://usage.smud.org/treebenefit/calculate.asp>

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Shade Trees: Estimated Benefits

Tree: London Plane
Tree Size: Large
Tree Type: Deciduous
Number of Tree: 1
Tree Orientation: W
Distance from the house: Near
Summer Load: No Cooling Load(0%)

Tree Age	KW Saved*	Annual KWh Saved*@	Annual Sequestration(C) lbs**	Annual Sequestration(CO2) lbs**	Annual Sequestration(CO2) tons**
1	0	0	1.36	4.97	0.003
2	0	0	2.41	8.84	0.004
3	0	0	4.67	17.13	0.009
4	0	0	6.63	24.32	0.012
5	0	0	10.84	39.79	0.02
6	0	0	14.76	54.16	0.027
7	0	0	18.82	69.09	0.035
8	0	0	23.79	87.33	0.044
9	0	0	29.67	108.88	0.055
10	0	0	35.69	130.99	0.066
11	0	0	41.57	152.55	0.077
12	0	0	47.44	174.1	0.088
13	0	0	53.31	195.66	0.099
14	0	0	59.04	216.66	0.11
15	0	0	64.76	237.66	0.12
16	0	0	70.33	258.11	0.131
17	0	0	75.9	278.56	0.141
18	0	0	80.42	295.14	0.15
19	0	0	83.88	307.85	0.156
20	0	0	87.35	320.57	0.162
21	0	0	90.36	331.62	0.168
22	0	0	91.41	335.49	0.17
23	0	0	92.32	338.81	0.172
24	0	0	93.22	342.12	0.173
25	0	0	92.32	338.81	0.172
26	0	0	91.41	335.49	0.17
27	0	0	90.51	332.17	0.168
28	0	0	89.16	327.2	0.166
29	0	0	87.8	322.22	0.163
30	0	0	86.44	317.25	0.161

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