



GOLDEN VALLEY TREE PARK

— B A L I N G U P —

THINNING THE TALL GUMS in the AUSTRALIAN COLLECTION

The Tree Park's Management Committee has undertaken a thinning programme in our Tall Eucalypt stand to set up the long term growth of these trees so that they can grow into a fine stand of large strong trees.

The work was undertaken in conjunction with a requirement of Western Power in August 2013 that put a thirty day work order on GVTP regarding 22 trees considered to be a risk to the power line that runs across the arboretum. That notice came as a surprise because we did tree pruning for Western Power little over a year ago. This new work order would have cost an estimated \$6-8000 for the Park.

As a management committee we decided to approach WAPRES, the SW woodchipping company to see if they would come and remove some of the offending trees in conjunction with an overall thinning of the stand of Tall Gums that were planted at the Park in 1988.

This thinning had been planned since 2007 because this group of selected eucalypt species had suffered frost damage when young causing many to grow with multiple stems or severe forks. Also there were too many trees in the area for the trees to be able to reach their full potential size. Since then the stand has started to self thin and we have already lost a couple of the best trees.

The thinning will help the best trees to grow strongly. WAPRES, with their contractors South West Haulage, agreed to help the Park by undertaking the thinning and removal *gratis* in return for the woodchip resource. We also retained eight of the trees marked by Western Power would be retained and high pruned by an arborist. The Department of Parks and Wild life, the Park's partner, have agreed to pay for this aspect.

Most unfortunately the Park experienced the worst winds since its inception during the thinning operation on Sunday 22nd September. The storm ripped a line through the remaining trees, taking down fourteen trees that we had intended to keep. Another twenty trees were damaged elsewhere in the Park on this same night.

Everything with trees takes some time. In the short term the stand looks a little empty now. But the retained trees will grow very fast, and the unintended gap caused by the storm will allow a new planting opportunity. For the long term we believe that we will have a magnificent stand of Tall Gums gracing the Australian Collection, as the trees quickly grow bigger and a refreshed understory establishes a new tier. So our Tall Gums will grow stronger and more resilient for generations to come.