



Somerset, home of giant trees

AUSTRALIA'S biggest forest red gum has its roots firmly planted in the Somerset region.

The 45m-tall monster was discovered recently as part of an initiative to identify the natural treasures of the area. Moves are being made to ensure its survival.

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Big tree competition reaches new heights

District is home to three of the nation's biggest trees

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THE Somerset is home to some of the biggest trees in the country.

A forest red gum found on the property of Noel and Wayne Keller has been identified as the biggest tree of its type in the country.

Similarly the nation's biggest black wattle tree and broad leaf mahogany tree were also discovered.

The trees were noted on the National Register of Big Trees after the Somerset Regional Council began a search for the largest tree in their region.

The Kellers' tree proved to be the biggest tree in the Somerset, winning on more than 500 points of classification. The competition had more than 30 entries of big trees of different species from across the Brisbane Valley.

National Register of Big Trees

co-ordinator Derek McIntosh said the competition was a "dream come true".

Mr McIntosh founded the national tree register three years ago and said the competition was the first of its kind.

"I want to use it as an example for other councils right around Australia," he said.

"If Somerset can do it, other councils can do it.

"It's wonderful to see a community taking the initiative with a competition like this – Somerset residents should be rightly proud of the big trees they have in the area."

Somerset natural resource management officer Trevor Page said the Kellers' red gum was a monster tree.

"It really is a giant amongst

trees, measuring some 8.3m around the trunk, standing tall at around 45m and with a spread of 35m," he said.

Recipients of the winning certificate, Noel and Wayne Keller, said they had no idea their tree was the biggest of its kind in the country.

"We knew it was a big old tree down there but probably like other people with big trees we didn't really think it would be the biggest one in the area," Noel said.

Somerset Mayor Graeme Lehmann said the competition had been a great initiative to find some of the region's natural treasures.

"This is about recognising the value of trees in the landscape in our region and the benefits that such trees bring to the people that look after them," he said.





MIGHTY GUM: Somerset's biggest tree, a forest red gum (*eucalyptus tereticornis*), is the biggest of its kind in Australia. Photo: CONTRIBUTED



WINNERS: Somerset Regional Council natural resource management officer Trevor Page, competition winners Noel and Wayne Keller, Mayor Graeme Lehmann and National Tree Register co-ordinator Derek McIntosh. Photo: Contributed