



South East Region Conservation Alliance

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Mr Frank Sartor
Minister for Climate Change and the Environment
Governor Macquarie Tower, Level 35,
1 Farrer Place, SYDNEY NSW 2000

office@sartor.minister.nsw.gov.au

Dear Mr Sartor,

Re: Yurammie Special Prescription Zone (YSPZ) Yurammie State Forest Compartments 963-967

Once again we are writing to request permanent protection for this high conservation value section of the forests in the Eden Region, this time as members of the South East Region Conservation Alliance (SERCA).

As you are aware in the Regional Forest Agreement (RFA) for Eden not all sensitive forested areas were protected. Yurammie, Mumbulla, Murrah, Tanja, and Bermagui State Forests all have 'disputed territories' that the community sought to have permanently protected because of their high conservation values. In order to act for the protection of these significant areas, SERCA was formed. Yurangalo Inc is a founding member of this organisation.

You are also aware there was strident community pressure to fully protect Compartments 963 – 967 as part of the South East Forests National Park. As a government compromise the YSPZ was created in the RFA between the State and Federal Governments. Yurangalo Inc has continued to lobby government in the intervening years to present the community view that the YSPZ is inadequate as this forest warrants permanent protection.

The high conservation values of this forest are very clear. The biodiversity is both rich and abundant; it is a vital part of Wyndham's water supply and offers considerable potential to play a role in Wyndham's economic future through tourism.

Water and tourism are vital to Wyndham's future. The village of Wyndham maintains an independent water supply. The Wyndham Water Users who manage this water scheme have indicated the village's reliance on the YSPZ in low flow and drought conditions. The viability of village depends on securing this area which acts to store and deliver water reliably over the long term. The continued lack of disturbance to the forest in the YSPZ is vital to this. Further, there needs to be no compromise to the role of the rainforests and swamps in this water supply. FNSW has indicated that (should logging occur) they expect the sawlog proportion to be 20% of the cut. This

proportion is way higher than that usually obtained (normally about 5%) and is a clear indication of the Old Growth nature of this forest.

Visitor commentary on the logging in the nearby and visible Gnupa State Forest has been overwhelmingly negative. This logging, which has already taken place in another part of Wyndham's water catchment, has given the local community a clear indication of what it has to lose. It has galvanised community support for the permanent protection of the YSPZ. Over 400 people attended a rally on March 7th to demonstrate their support. Once secured from logging,

the YSPZ offers considerable tourism potential. It offers easy driving and walking access to rainforests and swamps. In recognition of their value, the rainforests of the YSPZ have been listed on the register of the National Estate. Tourism will benefit our growing community.

ForestsNSW (FNSW) has indicated in its communications with Yurangalo Inc and the broader community no will or ability to provide the level of protection the community has always wanted for the YSPZ.

Information presented by FNSW at a first information day has done nothing to allay community fears in this regard. The hydrology information presented does not deal with water supply in dry times, nor does water flow data exist to predict this. There is no Candidate Old Growth marked on any map they have supplied. Specific long term data about biodiversity is almost non-existent, meaning that there is no way to verify the delivery of Ecologically Sustainable Forest Management. Survey for Threatened Species is demonstrably inadequate, as are the 'Special Prescriptions' FNSW has declared for this area. There is no offer of any additional prescriptions except for those dealing with visual and aesthetic considerations and these do not begin to meet the community's needs.

The community is aware of the myth of a sawlog driven industry. FNSW has indicated that 80% of the current proposed harvest in the YSPZ is non-sawlog timber. Yurangalo Inc does not regard this part of our catchment as 'waste wood', a product that South East Fibre Exports, a multinational corporation, can't sell and wants to burn for electricity.

In this International Year of Biodiversity there is an opportunity for the NSW government to address issues remaining from the Eden RFA. Whether for water, threatened species or biodiversity, high conservation value forests that remain in State Forests in Eden require permanent protection.

As a matter of urgency, will you please indicate how you intend to address these issues and act on our community's behalf? We await your reply.

Yours Sincerely,

Debra Harris
Yurangalo Representative to SERCA