

Letter to Joe Woodward, Deputy Director-General of DECCW by Heather Kenway 04.10

Dear Mr Woodward

I heard on ABC radio this morning that your Department had decided that FNSW had breached its Threatened Species Licence requirements in regard to logging compartment 2135 of Mumbulla State Forest, but you considered the breach too trivial to stop the logging. Forests NSW has said logging will recommence today.

I lodged a breach report on Tuesday 6 April 2010 with Mr Steve Hartley of your Department regarding FNSW's failure to consult with the South East Region Conservation Alliance (SERCA) or relevant member organisations and associates of it. I am aware of two other breach reports relating to inadequate surveys for koalas prior to logging commencing.

I find it extraordinary that the Department responsible for environment protection and specifically charged with enforcing requirements on FNSW for community consultation regards these matters as trivial.

Do you seriously believe that it is quite acceptable to log around the key habitat for the only identified surviving koala colony in the South East Forests, knowing that the koalas range up to 50 kilometres from the immediate habitat area, and that for the tiny population (at most 30-50 koalas) to recover over time will require young males to establish their own colonies away from the identified colony?

Does regional extinction not concern you? For the sake of woodchips that the Eden mill can't dispose of?

The two compartments (2135 and 2133) for which harvest plans have been approved are on the road to Mumbulla Falls within Mumbulla National Park. This is the second most visited tourist site in the shire. Koala feed trees have been identified in the compartments in Forest NSW's inadequate surveys. We set up an information site at the Falls over the Easter weekend, spoke to many visitors, locals and tourists, who were horrified at what is happening. Similarly with large numbers of people in Bermagui for the Four Winds Festival.

This logging is highly unpopular, and highly destructive of the environment. I urge you not to treat your responsibility as the environmental regulator as a trivial responsibility

Yours sincerely
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