

ICON FOREST THREATENED BY STATE FORESTS

Tuesday, 8 January 2008 - Bega District News

AN ICON forest that was saved from the woodchip mill during the heated forest wars of the 1980s and 1990s by a stop-work notice from the National Parks and Wildlife Service is currently being logged by Forest NSW.

Artist, conservationist and fashion designer Prue Acton says Forests NSW is in the process of logging Nalbaugh State Forest compartments 1401 and 1402.

"How hypocritical is the Lemma Government, establishing the Department of Environment and Climate Change yet overseeing the total annihilation of massive old growth trees that store crucial carbon, retain water for catchments and provide habitat for biodiversity?" she asked.

"In 1992 the National Parks and Wildlife Service placed a stop-work notice on the compartments that are currently being demolished. "I call on the Lemma Government to immediately put another stop-work notice on this forest before it is all gone.

"Why were these forests important enough to have stop-work notices placed on them 15 years ago, but now in this new climate of global warming, when we have more than enough information and science about the critical importance of forests to the health of our planet, why are they now being destroyed?

"These compartments are away from urban areas but if the public only knew what was happening in their own State and country they would be appalled. "I also call on the new Federal Government to stop their State counterparts from undoing all the good work that has begun with the negotiations at Bali.

"Australia is once again on the front foot, but here in south eastern NSW enormous trees, important forest is being destroyed by stealth.

"Environmentally and economically this is a travesty. Those trees are worth more in the ground than they are going to the woodchip mill."

Ms Acton, who lives at Wallagoot, has invited Mr Lemma and the Opposition Leader Barry O'Farrell to travel to Nalbaugh State Forest.

"Nalbaugh is just one of a number of icon forests that Forests NSW have on their hit list over the next 12 months," she said. "The predictable bleats about the Regional Forest Agreements creating a good outcome for conservationists and industry are no longer valid.

"The RFA review process has never happened in the south east.

"Due process has not been followed and the RFAs were created before global warming was seen as the global crisis it is."