

Media Release:

Residents call for dialog with State Forests over logging Richard Blakers 04.10

Logging is scheduled for March 2010 in Tanja State Forest in areas close to Bega, Tathra and Mogareeka. The logging will be visible from Tathra and will effect everyone living in and around these towns.

On Saturday 27th February twenty eight local residents held a meeting called at short notice to discuss the proposed logging.

All those at the meeting were concerned about the impacts logging would have. They resolved to seek an urgent meeting with NSW State Forests to:

1. Ask State Forests to explain the proposed logging operations in Tanja State Forest
2. Have State Forests listen to and respond to residents concerns
3. Set up a mechanism for an ongoing discussion between residents and State Forests

Six people were nominated to represent the residents interests in the discussions with State Forests.

The residents are very worried about the effect the logging will have on water quality and fish stocks in the Bega River. The areas for logging drain directly into the north side of the Bega River between Chinnock Lagoon and Mogareeka. Siltation will impact on fish stocks throughout the lower reaches of the Bega River at Tathra.

Residents are also worried about a loss of legitimate recreational and scenic values. Tanja State Forest is used for recreation by residents and visitors to Bega and Tathra. The Warf To Waves cycling event was conducted along Reedy Swamp Road, and cyclists and bush walkers are common on Goats Knob Road. Logging will be highly visible from both these roads. Log dumps will be located right next to the roads.

Residents are also concerned about an increased fire risk after the logging. Currently the forests proposed for logging mostly have a closed canopy with only light and widely scattered undergrowth. Opening the forest canopy and disturbing the soil will lead to thick regrowth consisting of fire prone vegetation such as the forest she oak and young eucalyptus.

Logging will result in heavy truck and machinery movements along Reedy Swamp Road, Tarraganda Lane, Bega and through Mogareeka and Tathra. School children and local residents using the roads will be at risk.

Residents are concerned about the effects the logging will have on a number of endangered species of birds and animals that are found in and around the proposed logging areas. These include the Powerful Owl, Barking Owl, Yellow Bellied Glider and Red Tail Black Cockatoo.

Finally, residents are concerned that this part of Tanja State Forest is not really suitable for production forestry. The terrain is steep, the soil is poor and does not hold moisture well. Given its proximity to major urban areas of Bega and Tathra they think the trees are far more valuable to the community if they are left in the forest.