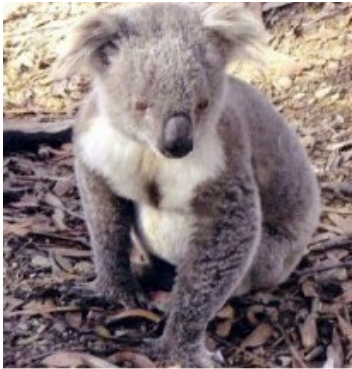


**MEDIA RELEASE: Forests NSW began logging of Compartment 2001 of Bermagui State Forest today. SEFR 21/06/2011**



2001 is critical Koala habitat, which FNSW themselves now admit. The Office of Environment and Heritage were unaware that logging had commenced. The logging is on the shores of Black Lagoon, an official sanctuary zone and part of Wallaga Lake Batemans Marine Park.

“There were koalas recorded in the area in the 90s. In 2002 there was a koala sighting near the creek. We know the area is an important corridor and refugia for koalas and other endangered species,” said Ms Lisa Stone, spokesperson for South East Forest Rescue.

“It is our understanding that the survey Forests NSW undertook is inadequate and not comprehensive.”

The logging is contrary to recommendations from expert consultants, local residents and conservation groups that forests in the area should be expertly managed for koalas and other species. The logging contractor, Wilton Logging has been found to have logged unlawfully in breach of regulations in Glenbog State Forest, was found to have committed the same breaches in Yambulla State Forest and was found to have logged private land unlawfully.[1] Further conservationists state Forests NSW have not undertaken the required consultation with conservationists, or the relevant wildlife group WIRES.[2]

“Destroying Koala habitat on the only soil landscape known to support koalas is unacceptable, particularly when the requirements of the NSW Koala Recovery Plan have not been met,” said Mr Robert Bertram, local Friends of Five Forests member. “Forests NSW survey method does not take into account the survival of koalas in the wild.”

“This is yet another example of Forests NSW lack of care for community and the environment,” said Ms Stone. “This industrial logging and burning means many forests are unable to support most threatened and endangered species and unable to recover.”

This forest is also habitat for the nationally listed endangered swift parrot, sighted in the area in the past.

“The propping up by the State Government of this unlawful industry just makes no sense given that Forests NSW is currently running at millions of dollars in debt and the native forest logging industry has proven to be unsustainable,” said Ms Stone.

“The past government’s policy of destroying habitat to satisfy ‘wood supply agreements’ is robbing from the future generations their chance of survival. The time for political machinations is over,” said Ms Stone. “We urge the newly appointed Minister for the Environment, Robyn Parker, to step in on behalf of the native forests and their dependents and stop these archaic practices.”

SEFR will again be commissioning an expert report to investigate the adequacy of the Forests NSW survey.

[1]

See attached response from OEH; Director-General Department of Environment and Climate Change v Wilton [2008] NSWLEC 297.

[2]

Eden IFOA r.8.8.12; the word ‘consultation’ is a verb meaning: to seek information or advice from; or: to seek permission or approval from; its origin is from the Latin consultare, from consulere ‘take counsel’; see Oxford English Dictionary (Oxford University Press, 2010.); method of consultation is defined in Environment Protection and Biodiversity Act 1998 (Cth) s 303FR.

South East Forest Rescue

'Stoppin the Choppin'

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