

Seán Burke
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Kate Halton
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Via email: kate.halton@fcnsw.com.au

Dear Kate,

Further to your letter regarding proposed logging in Compartments 2003 and 2069 koala habitat, I would like to offer the following information.

These compartments have had koalas recorded in or adjacent to them in the past and though there are no recent recorded sightings, the habitat is still suitable and will assist with the recovery of the endangered population of koalas to the south.

Of particular concern to me is the proposal to gut Cpt 2069. This compartment was partially logged in both the eastern and western areas a few years back and this proposal seeks to now take out the heart of the compartment. This compartment is the only remaining publicly owned land that provides a corridor for koalas between the Murrah/Biamanga populations and the Kooraban and Gulaga National Parks where koalas were plentiful in earlier years. It is essential that this corridor remains intact to allow the expansion of the Murrah population as it recovers and young males are required to move on.

I've spoken with neighbours of both compartments who have seen koalas in these areas up to the late 1990s and despite the fact that there have been no recorded sightings in recent years, there is a high possibility that there are isolated small populations in the region that may use these compartments to feed and transition to other areas. One neighbour said that koalas were plentiful when he first came there and cleared his property and they left copses of trees for them where they found them. He was quite surprised that they soon left and haven't returned to those copses. This would be the same outcome if industrial logging is conducted in these compartments – koalas wouldn't return and that's not acceptable.

It is my belief that there are many other threatened and endangered species within these compartments and they should be added to the Murrah Flora Reserve to protect them as habitat for koalas and other species and a corridor for koalas to access a wider range of forests to live and thrive. I also believe that there would be sustained protest action should this harvesting go ahead.

I would also request that you consult with the Native title claimants as there is now an accepted and registered claim over these compartments. You should also wait until the Boards of Biamanga and Gulaga National Parks are reappointed and consult with them before any action is undertaken to harvest these forests.

Yours sincerely,

Seán Burke.