



South East Region Conservation Alliance

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Letter to the editor, Bega District News

Logging industry lobby group, Timber NSW (BDN 13/3/15) claims that Forestry Corporation management costs are lower than those for National Parks. It is one of the basic arguments in their campaign to have the same tenure for all public forests and to open up National Parks for logging.

Supposing we took their figures at face value, what would that show us anyway?

They would show us that the Forestry Corporation spends next to nothing on pest and weed control, next to nothing on "fire management" and pays nothing at all for the damage it does to the environment.

But, even with its apparently lower costs, the Forestry Corporation still manages to make multi million dollar losses year after year on native forest logging. But we cannot take the industry claims at face value; there is more to it than that. A growing sum of Forestry Corporation expenses, including some on roads and fire control - are separately reimbursed under the Community Service Obligation (CSO), by the Treasurer, as it happens. That is the same Treasurer who (because of his Ministerial position) is a 50% shareholder in the Forestry Corporation. The CSO enables the Forestry Corporation to subsidise, conceal and shift costs to disguise the true dire state of its finances.

Since Mr Constance has been a shareholder in the Forestry Corporation he has presided over almost \$30 million losses in native forest logging. That is \$30M that NSW taxpayers have had to find from somewhere else.

As Treasurer he should be acting on behalf of the taxpayers as a whole, not just one destructive sectional interest. No amount of spin from his industry allies can conceal that.

Yours,

Harriett Swift
Chipstop
22nd March 2015