



Your reference

Our reference Heather Kenway Tanja 2012

FORESTS NSW
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8 November 2012

Heather Kenway
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Dear Heather,

Re: Tanja State Forest

Thank you for your letter to the Minister for Primary Industries, Hon. Katrina Hodgkinson, regarding proposed harvesting of Tanja State Forest. Minister Hodgkinson has asked that I respond on her behalf.

Under the Eden Regional Forest Agreement (RFA), State forests which were required to meet regional reservation targets were transferred to the National Park estate. Tanja State Forest was not required to meet reservation targets, so was approved as available for timber harvesting subject to environmental prescriptions.

Operating under the Eden Integrated Forestry Operations Approval (IFOA), Forests NSW (FNSW) had harvesting plans in place to commence harvesting in Tanja State Forest during August 2012. However, following the detection of Koala droppings in the planned harvest area, harvesting was suspended pending further investigation of the best way to ensure koala protection.

Following discussions with the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) and the Environment Protection Authority (EPA), FNSW has decided that harvesting in Tanja SF will remain on hold until further work is conducted. That further work is one of the commitments the NSW agencies agreed to in gaining the \$1.9M grant for the 'Corridors and Key Habitat for Koalas in the NSW Far South Coast' project, funded by the Federal Government's Biodiversity Fund.

Under the Federal grant, koala surveys are currently being conducted across four State forests – Tanja, Mumbulla, Murrah and Bermagui. Once the surveys are completed and results analysed, FNSW, OEH and EPA have committed to finalising harvest exclusion zones and harvesting prescriptions for koalas in those four State forests and the broader Eden RFA region. These agreed prescriptions will then be formalised in an Amendment to the Eden IFOA.

The Federal grant also coincided with the recent listing by the Commonwealth of some koala populations in Queensland, New South Wales and Australian Capital Territory as

“vulnerable” under national environment law. That decision emphasises the already strong protection measures for koalas listed as a threatened species under NSW legislation.

In NSW, koalas prefer and hence are concentrated on, fertile, flatter landscapes. They mainly occur on the central and north coasts, with some other larger populations west of the Great Dividing Range. The significant populations include those around Gunnedah, Port Stephens, Bellingen, Coffs Harbour and Iluka. There are significant but smaller populations in the Campbelltown region, and of course in some of the South Coast forests.

The identified potential threats to the koala in NSW remain habitat fragmentation for human development, human activity, wildfire, wild dogs, clearing, vehicles and drought.

If FNSW re-schedules timber harvesting in Tanja State Forest at some time in the future, it will be planned to comply with revised prescriptions under the Eden IFOA. FNSW is also cognisant that the final areas excluded for koala presence and habitat must be balanced with maintenance of supply to the local south coast timber industry to which the NSW Government has legal long term commitments.

I have asked Mr Kevin Petty, Planning Manager Southern to be available to discuss this matter further if you wish. Mr Petty may be contacted on 4475 1414.

Yours sincerely,



DANIEL TUAN
REGIONAL MANAGER SOUTHERN