

Letter sent to: The Age, The Australian, Canberra Times, The Courier Mail, The Daily Telegraph, SMH, 26.06.2011

LOGGING KOALA HABITAT COMMENCES IN BERMAGUI

Logging within areas which support a remnant koala colony, has commenced in Bermagui's State Forest only a few kilometres from residential areas. Ironically, this coincides with a Senate Inquiry into the status, health and sustainability of Australia's koala population.

Forests NSW state that they are not logging near the koala's last known habitat yet no recent survey has been conducted. How can koalas survive the burning of a fire-break, logging in places where they may transit, and post logging burn? Other species found in this forest include sooty owls, echidnas, wombats, and wallabies. The fastest parrot on earth, the Swift Parrot, migrates here from Tasmania to breed and feed. Previous 'clear felling' and 'thinning' operations have degraded the topsoil as runoff enters nearby Wallaga Lake. Further logging may render it difficult for vegetation to grow and canopy removal completes the picture of transitioning these once moist and lush environments, to a degraded and exposed ones.

The SE Forests of NSW are the most carbon rich forests in the world. Their destruction flies in the face of everything we know about conservation of the environment and carbon storage. To protect the air we breathe and the land we share with our iconic plants and animals, it is essential that we keep native forest trees in the ground.

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