

Media Release

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Heavy Logging Blights Gateway to Nature Coast and Raises Fire Risks

Conservation groups have slammed Forestry Corporation for its heavy logging on the Princes Highway just north of Batemans Bay, in the Benandarah and Boyd State Forests.

John Perkins, Convenor of the Friends of Durras said “This is reckless and ugly forestry which undermines years of work by the tourism industry to promote Eurobodalla Shire as the Nature Coast.”

“The tiny, tax payer subsidized native forest logging is a direct threat to a major employer in the Shire, tourism and related holiday making and recreation. People simply do not want their experiences blighted by intensive logging and woodchipping.”

Noel Plumb, Convenor of forest campaign group ChipBusters, a member of the Nature Conservation Council of NSW, said “The intensity of logging in these forests just west of the princes Highway over the last two years has greatly increased the fire risk to all the nearby coastal communities for several decades at least. Termeil, North Durras, South Durras, Long Beach and Maloneys Beach are all threatened as well as the iconic Murramarang National Park and Lake Durras which are major attractions for visitors and tourists.”

“The irresponsible failure to complete post logging burns in many compartments is clear to see with an appalling amount of waste, so called logging slash, piled up against remnant trees in breach of forestry regulations, a firebomb just waiting to go off.”

“Even if these burns are completed, and it is too late this year, the forests area much greater fire risk for decades as the intensive logging removes 80 or 90% of the canopy – effectively clear felling the forest. This dries the forest out and then the massive regrowth of saplings from the post logging burns provides a highly combustible fire mass for decades to come.

John said “It’s not only our communities at risk but this intensive logging, mainly for woodchips, is a disaster for forest wildlife. It removes most of the older trees with hollows which are essential for such benchmark species as the Greater Glider and the Yellow Bellied Glider. These forests were once home to koalas but they have now disappeared under the impact of the clear-felling over the last two decades. We fear the gliders will also become locally rare or extinct unless the logging stops.”

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