

MEDIA RELEASE: BREACHES IN TANTAWANGALO STATE FOREST. LISA STONE. 22.11.2012

Logging has been halted in Tantawangalo State Forest near Bega this morning. Evidence of systematic damage to forests in southern NSW as a result of government-supervised logging has forced the environment department EPA to again investigate the state-run logging agency, Forests NSW.

The logging of rocky outcrops, inaccurate surveys and damage to threatened and endangered species habitat in Tantawangalo could have been prevented say conservation group South East Forest Rescue, who sent a pre-logging report on the 30 August warning that there were rocky outcrops in the compartment and that logging should not begin until they were properly surveyed.

“Forests NSW have gotten away with actions the average person would be fined hundreds of thousands of dollars for,” said Lisa Stone, spokesperson for South East Forest Rescue. “Evidence shows that the regulations are being breached in a routine way,” said Ms Stone. “Forests NSW have been sent warning letters, but that’s like the English police saying ‘Stop – or I’ll say stop again’.”

Damage similar to that at Tantawangalo State Forest was identified by South East Forest Rescue in other Tantawangalo compartments as well as Glenbog and Yambulla State Forests, after Forests NSW logging operations.

“These regulations have been in place for 14 years, they are simple to follow and yet they are being broken regularly,” said Ms Stone. “The government has tried warning letters, its tried fines, but nothing is working. Citizens can’t take FNSW to court. The EPA won’t even though this is huge environmental damage. Its time the NSW Government cut the cord and ended destructive native forest logging.”

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