



The Honourable Matt Kean MP
Minister for Energy and Environment

Ref: MD20/6982

Ms Harriett Swift
Deputy Convener
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Dear Ms Swift

Thank you for your letter about native forestry operations in Yambulla State Forest. I appreciate you bringing your concerns to my attention.

The NSW Government remains committed to the long-term and environmentally sustainable management of our native forests.

The unprecedented black summer bushfires have had a major impact on native forests, the environment, local communities and local forestry industries. As part of the NSW Government's bushfire recovery efforts, work is underway to ensure regional jobs, economies and timber for rebuilding communities can be sustained. In doing so, action is being taken to minimise further environmental impacts of logging and help with wildlife recovery efforts.

The Forestry Corporation of NSW (FCNSW) is authorised to undertake native forestry operations in state forests by the *Forestry Act 2012*, provided it complies with Integrated Forestry Operations Approvals (IFOAs). The IFOAs set out conditions designed to manage the impact of forestry operations on the environment, including rules which protect soils, water, ecosystems, native plants and animals.

For timber harvesting in some burnt areas, like Yambulla State Forest, additional site-specific operating conditions have been issued by the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA). They are tailored to mitigate the specific environmental risks that occur at each site, including risks to the yellow-bellied gliders on the south coast of NSW.

For example, the site-specific operating conditions for Yambulla State Forest require a lower intensity of logging than would normally be permitted, unburnt forest within the site is protected, and there are significant increases to the protection of streams, feed trees and hollow-bearing trees which provide critical refuge habitat for the species. The additional site-specific operating conditions are required to be applied in addition to the existing prescriptions set out in the Coastal IFOAs.

The EPA is continuing to work with FCNSW and NSW Government agencies to determine a long-term approach to manage the risks posed by timber harvesting in the post-fire landscapes of coastal NSW.

The EPA will continue to post regular updates on the regulation of native forestry after the black summer bushfires on its website at www.epa.nsw.gov.au/your-environment/native-forestry/bushfire-affected-forestry-operations.

Given the heightened risks posed by the black summer fires, the EPA has increased its regulatory presence for native forestry and is inspecting forestry operations before, during and following logging operations to promote FCNSW compliance with the IFOA requirements, including the additional rules that apply to burnt forests. The EPA will continue to take all reasonable enforcement action if any non-compliances are identified.

If you have any more questions about this issue, please contact Roger Bluett, Acting Manager Forestry Policy, EPA on 9995 6093 or at roger.bluett@epa.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



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