

## **MEDIA ALERT 01.02.11**

### **MUMBULLA LOGGING PROTEST AND NATIVE TITLE CASES REACH COURT 02.02.11**

Hearings for anti-native forest logging and woodchip protesters Louis Campbell, Cr Keith Hughes, James Ryan and Jane Salmon will commence in Bega District Court House on Wed Feb 2nd. The hearings relate to matters dating from April or May 2010.

The defendants have pled not guilty to a range of charges.

The commencement of the hearings coincides with the International Inauguration of the United Nations' Year of the Forests.

It has been alleged that Mr Campbell, an Aboriginal man with family and personal links to the Mountain, refused to move from Mumbulla Mountain on 17 May 2010 when instructed to do so by police.

Mumbulla Mountain is deemed sacred by local Aboriginal people.

The coupes logged adjacent to Mr Campbell's non-violent, silent protest contained sites of Aboriginal interest which had been logged, contravening Environmental Law. Moreover, an error by Forests NSW meant that the area in which the coupe was situated had not been returned to NWPS as per a decades old agreement.

Mr Campbell's case pertains to Native Title and the Environment Defenders Office have found a barrister to work pro bono who will travel from Sydney.

The biodiversity, carbon storage, topsoil and water sequestration of Mumbulla Mountain is also threatened by logging of native forest for woodchips from Eden.

The koala population of Mumbulla has been decimated over decades and there are now thought to be fewer than 50 remaining in the region. Koalas are reliant upon specific species of gum from Mumbulla in order to maintain habitat.

It is likely that Forests NSW and SEFE will take an interest in proceedings.

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