

MEDIA RELEASE: ACTIVISTS AT LOGGERHEADS WITH FORESTS NSW, NOT CONTRACTORS. SOUTH EAST FOREST RESCUE 01.02.2012



Damaged windscreen at Boyne.

Anger flared in Boyne State Forest yesterday morning as protestors vehicles were set upon by logging contractors. Witnesses recount a large chain was thrown onto the vehicle shattering the windscreen and denting the roof and bonnet. Another protestor being forced to cling to the bull-bar of the logging contractors vehicle that refused to stop.

As usual, Police Rescue attended the scene and detached the logging machines from the tree-sit, which was safely anchored to another point. Some logging work eventually resumed while the protestor remained aloft in the tree-sit. Police made no arrests.

As usual, South East Forest Rescue has notified the ministers and regulator and called for the operation to remain suspended until 1 March 2012.

“The IFOA requires monthly advance notice of forestry operations. This Boyne operation began illegally without notice.” said the conservation group today.

“These logging contractors, Boss Logging Pty Ltd are registered in Bruthen Victoria, this is no excuse for such abhorrent behaviour. The tree-sitter managed to escape unscathed during the evening before the threats of chopping down the tree could be realised.

“Attacking non-violent protestors and their property is unreasonable as well as unlawful. South East Forest Rescue has staged such frontline actions many times in the past along the south coast, and on all those occasions the logging machinery has not been harmed in any material way.

“Lately some loggers have accused peaceful protesters of sabotage. Framing or accusing South East Forest Rescue won't wash. We have a track record of non-violence and of proper conduct at blockades.

“Monkey wrenching may be on the increase in the wider community. Public tension over logging may be rising with frustration over the Tasmania deal and the failure of governments to save mainland forests.

“Forests NSW know we don't damage machines, and should know they are required to operate according to the law at all times. This has not stopped them from calling us names. Yet, we seem to have to be constantly reminding them of their compliance conditions. Native forests need to be protected to ensure sustainable development goals have a chance at being met. It is the wood-supply contracts that are causing vandalism in this case.

“We call on the state and federal Minister to enforce breaches and to switch to from native forest logging to plantation timber immediately.

Contact: Lisa Stone 0428 640 271, 0437 471 763