



Ed Hill – Goongerah Environment Centre

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To: The DELWP Forest Compliance Unit

Re: Logged and unlogged areas requiring FMZ amendments based on VicForests' pre logging targeted survey results.

21/4/2016

To the Department of Environment Land Water and Planning,

I write on behalf of Goongerah Environment Centre (GECO) to inform the Department of a number of logged and yet to be logged coupes in the East Gippsland FMA where VicForest surveys have recorded the presence of protected species but the required Forest Management Zoning (FMZ) scheme amendments appear to have not been made.

We have examined the publically available survey reports in the VicForests website and found a significant number of coupes where protected species have been detected in configurations that trigger the requirement for FMZ amendments to be made.

In several cases the FMZ amendments have not been made and logging has already taken place or is still planned to take place without the required implementation of Special Protection Zones and Special Management Zones for protected species.

VicForests' survey reports can be accessed at this link

<http://vicforests.com.au/planning-1/protecting-biodiversity/targeted-species-surveys>

Below is a list of coupes that we have analysed where VicForests' surveys have found protected species, however there is no evidence that the required SPZs and SMZs have been implemented. Could you please provide us with information about each of the coupes listed below that explains why FMZ amendments have not been made and if and when they will be made?

DELWP is required to implement SPZs and SMZs, not VicForests. It is a conflict of interest for VicForests to implement zoning actions. Biodiversity experts should design the SPZs and SMZs in a way that maximises habitat conservation outcomes for the relevant species, without considering the interests of VicForests.

Could DELWP please inform us if VicForests share their survey results with DELWP and if DELWP are aware that areas have been logged and may be logged in the future without implementation of the legally required protection and zoning measures.

We urge the Forest Compliance Unit to review all VicForests survey reports to ensure the required zoning amendments that are required by law are implemented prior to logging.

We would consider it standard procedure for the Forest Compliance Unit to review VicForests' pre logging targeted survey reports to ensure the regulatory framework is being adhered to and the required FMZ amendments are implemented prior to logging.

If your investigation in these coupes finds that VicForests has not shared their survey data with DELWP and they have logged areas without the legally required FMZ amendments, we strongly urge DELWP to prosecute VicForests for these serious breaches of the regulatory framework.

This matter is both serious and urgent; as several of these coupes have already been logged in breach of the law and others are to be logged in the near future.

We would appreciate a prompt response to these questions.

Regards,

Ed Hill – Goongerah Environment Centre (GECO)

892-505-0010 – I'm Back – Bendoc

Surveyed 24/2/2011. Logged – 2012/13

Six Yellow Bellied Gliders were found within approx 300m during a spotlighting survey.

The results of this survey are in survey report: Package 3 +4

These survey results require a 100-hectare Special Protection Zone to be implemented by DELWP.

848-503-0003 - Farmer's coupe – Cann River

Surveyed 17/5/2011 – Logged - 2011/12

VicForests survey recorded a high density of Yellow Bellied Gliders along a 900m transect. Five were recorded on the spotlighting transect, 3 from call play back and 2 from dusk listening. This high density of Yellow Bellied Gliders requires the implementation of a 100 hectare Special Protection Zone.

The coupe was logged without the implementation of required protections for the Yellow Bellied Glider.

The VicForests survey report for this coupe can be found in Package 5.

806-504-0009 – Right Ear – Nowa Nowa

Surveyed 24/4/2013 – Unlogged (based on most recent logging history and Google earth imagery)

Seven Yellow Bellied Gliders were found within approximately 500m. A map was produced with this survey report clearly showing the locations of the seven Yellow Bellied Gliders along the transect. This map is on page 19 of the survey report that can be found in package 12.1.

This high density of Yellow Bellied Gliders requires a 100 hectare Special Protection Zone.

891-516-0031 – “Middle Bit” & 891-516-0032 – “Bottom Bit” - Bendoc

Surveyed 16/5/11 - Logged 2011/12

Long Footed Potoroo were found in each of these coupes. The legally required 150-hectare SMZ with 50 hectares of retained habitat has not been implemented.

Results of these surveys can be found in package 8.2.

“Middle Bit” still has about one third of the coupe area intact, however it is still too small to provide for all of the required 50 hectares of retained habitat that should be within the 150 hectare SMZ.

We urge DELWP to direct VicForests not to re-commence logging in this coupe as the small area left will need to be placed into the Long-footed Potoroo SMZ as retained habitat.

749-509-0006 – Thank – Swift’s Creek

Surveyed 8/2/2012

VicForests surveys recorded the presence of the rare and protected Velvety Geebung (*Persoonia subvelutina*) in the centre of the coupe. The required 200m radius SMZ that must ensure the species is adequately protected has not been implemented.

VicForests’ survey data can be found in the survey report within package 9

890-502-0001 – Too Many Oranges – Bendoc

Surveyed 21/5/2015 - Unlogged.

A VicForests survey recorded 11 Greater gliders in 1km. This requires a 100 hectare Special Protection Zone. There is no record of any Special Protection Zone.

A Powerful Owl was also heard calling repeatedly and seen on this survey indicating a roost site is likely to be within the coupe boundary.

895-513-0020 – Black Bird - Bendoc

Surveyed, 20/3/2013 – Unlogged

A VicForests’ survey located an Owl roost tree within the coupe. VicForests’ surveyors believed the roost was likely to be used by a Powerful Owl.

The required 3-hectare SPZ and 250-300 m radius SMZ do not appear to have been implemented.

The survey report can be found in Package 12.1

892-514-0006 – Sleeve – Bendoc

Surveyed 11/6/13 - Unlogged

A VicForest survey located a potential Owl roost tree with white wash nearby and several other observations of white wash throughout the coupe and close to the roost tree. Call play back surveys observed a pair of Sooty Owls and a Powerful Owl.

A spotlighting survey in the coupe observed the Powerful Owl a second time as well as a high density of Greater Gliders.

The required 3-hectare SPZ and 250-300m radius SMZ for the Powerful Owl roost site do not appear to have been implemented.

The survey report can be found in package 13.

