



## Economic Costs & Benefits of Creating the Richmond River Koala Parks

Independent analysis shows that protecting the proposed **56,000 ha Richmond River Koala Parks (RRKPs)** is overwhelmingly in the public interest — economically, socially, and environmentally.

### ***What Are the Expected Economic Impacts?***

#### **Job impacts:**

The RRKPs currently supply **about 6.5% of the timber** taken from north-east NSW's public native forests. Based on this, an estimated **20–40 direct timber jobs** may be affected if the area is fully protected.

However, these workers are expected to receive **generous redundancy, retraining, and transition support**, like the package announced for the Great Koala National Park (GKNP), which unions and industry have described as **fair and dignified**.

#### **Public cost of continuing to log:**

Forestry Corporation currently **loses more than \$1.53 million each year** logging just the RRKP forests — a cost carried by taxpayers. This does not include additional public subsidies for roads, bridges, and mill upgrades.

### ***What Are the Economic Benefits of Protection?***

Protecting the RRKPs delivers significant long-term benefits:

- **Recovering wildlife and ecosystems**, including dozens of threatened species
- **Increased carbon sequestration**, helping meet climate targets

- **Higher water yields and reduced flood risk**
- **Reduced fire intensity** as forests mature
- **A major tourism boost**, following patterns expected in the GKNP
- **New jobs** in park management, conservation, science, and nature-based tourism

Studies of the **Great Koala National Park** show that forest protection can generate:

- **9,000+ new jobs** in tourism over 15 years
- **Over \$1 billion in increased economic output**
- **Significant carbon sequestration benefits**

Multiple independent reports (Blueprint Institute, Frontier Economics, University of Newcastle) conclude that **the long-term economic gains from tourism and carbon alone outweigh the cost of industry restructuring.**

### ***What Would a Transition Cost?***

Based on comparable studies, a **structural adjustment package** for the RPKPs is likely to cost in the order of **\$14 million** — a single cost unlike the recurring losses taxpayers currently absorb to keep logging going.

### ***Bottom Line***

Creating the Richmond River Koala Parks is a **sound investment.**

It replaces an industry currently running at a loss with long-term economic benefits and a sustainable future for workers, communities, and wildlife.



If you'd like the full analysis, you can read **Dailan Pugh's detailed economic assessment (Northeast Forest Alliance, November 2025)**

**[www.richmondriverkoalaparks.com](http://www.richmondriverkoalaparks.com)**