

To the Department Sustainability and Environment and VicForests Staff,

ACTIVE LOGGING COUPES REQUIRING THREATENED SPECIES AND/OR SPECIES DENSITY SURVEYS

This letter requires a response to issues and requirements raised within from both the Department of Sustainability and Environment and VicForests and action from both bodies concerning the enforcement of compliance and compliance, respectively, with regard to the relevant Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act Action Statement and East Gippsland Forest Management Plan.

This letter concerns the likely presence of a threatened species and/or density occurrence of a species requiring responsive management prescriptions to be implemented that appropriately undertaken surveys may record in two particular of VicForests scheduled and currently active logging coupes.

Coupe: 842-510-0012 (Rich Forest Block)

1a. This coupe falls entirely within the Long Footed Potoroo (*Potorous longipes*) distributional range and is surrounded by DSE records and/or publicly submitted records of this species.

This information was detailed and further brought to the attention of both the Department and VicForests in a letter (October, 2010) concerning the likely presence of this species and in an accompanying document (*Rich Forest Block LFP Surveys*) demonstrating the proximity of Long Footed Potoroo records to scheduled logging coupes.

These documents highlighted the requirement of those undertaking or planning the destruction of habitat possibly been used by an endangered species to, *prior to its destruction*, firstly ascertain the presence and/or absence of the particular species at the sites (scheduled logging coupes) and then, if the species is detected, implement the relevant management prescriptions concerning its conservation as required under the relevant FFGA Action Statement.

Coupe: 830-513-0009 (Kuark Forest Block)

2a. This coupe is also likely to contain the Long Footed Potoroo and is thus also requiring of action similar to that detailed in **1a.** above *prior* to the destruction of this habitat.

2b. On the 04/11/2010 a preliminary spotlighting exercise was undertaken by the author of this letter from the recently cut “loglanding” and “snig track” within this coupe estimated to have been initiated on this date or one or two days previous.

The following table details individuals encountered in this exercise:
Position Format (GDA94/UTM-UPS)

TIME	SPECIES	TYPE	BEARING	LOCATION	COMMENT
N/A	Southern Boobook Owl	Aural	N/A	N/A	Calling throughout from multiple locations
8:50	Brushtail Possum sp. with young	Visual	N/A On track	55 H 653332 5839337	Beginning of snig track from landing
8:56	Sugar Glider	a. Aural b. Aural	a. 85o b. 0o	55 H 653480 5839296	Along snig track
9:02	Brushtail Possum sp.	Visual	N/A On Track	55 H 653537 5839240	Along snig track
9:16	Greater Glider	Visual	150o	55 H 653255 5839366	Adjacent to log landing
9:18	Greater Glider	Visual	310o	55 H 653211 5839353	Adjacent to log landing

The results of this spotlighting exercise demonstrate the presence of at least two Greater Glider (*Petauroides volans*) individuals around the log landing of this coupe.

No further information as to the presence/absence or density of this population was gathered in this preliminary exercise. Further investigations will be required to ascertain the true density of the Greater Glider at this location.

Given the close proximity of the two individuals encountered, it is possible that such a further investigation may demonstrate that this site exhibits an occurrence of the species corresponding to that detailed in the East Gippsland Forest Management Plan as an “area of high mammal richness or diversity”.

If the occurrence level specified on page 30 of the EG FMP is discovered,

“Greater Glider and Common Brushtail Possum - > 2 individuals per ha, >10 per km, or > 15 per hour of spotlighting.”

this document provides that “approximately 100 ha of suitable habitat will [need to] be included in the SPZ”.

Given those individuals encountered on the night of this spotlighting exercise and the *conservation measures required to be implemented as a prerequisite for logging in East Gippsland*, this site (scheduled and active logging coupe) will need to be immediately halted and appropriately and fully investigated to ascertain its compliance or otherwise with the East Gippsland Forest Management Plan.

The plan of action detailed above concerning arboreal mammal densities in coupe 830-513-0009 responsive to this latest information will need to be undertaken. Knowledge of

presence/absence and habitat use if detected of the Long Footed Potoroo in both coupes 830-513-0009 and 842-510-0012 will need to be gathered if this has not already been undertaken.

Specific Questions:

i. Please inform me that these actions have been or will be undertaken (in advance of logging) if plans and operations clear fell logging these coupes continue to be pursued.

ii. Ensure the immediate cessation of logging activities in these coupes until such time as these surveys have been carried out and appropriate management prescriptions are implemented if required.

iii. Alternatively, if you do not intend to undertake these actions please inform me as soon as possible of this information and provide reasons for proceeding in this way.

iv. Confirm and inform me that this situation is not been repeated in other VicForests scheduled logging coupes with respect to threatened species and/or conservation management guidelines.

Thankyou, I await your response.

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