

Media Release: Conserving Critical Wildlife Refugia in Our Native Forests

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Regional conservationists have just met in Bermagui to discuss public native forests in southeast NSW.

Members of the South East Region Conservation Alliance, the National Parks Association of NSW, and the National Trust far south coast branch, agreed that making State Forests designated protected areas would maximize environmental and financial outcomes.

This initiative would safeguard 400,000ha of public native forests from further logging for woodchips under the current anachronistic RFAs. Dr Bronte Somerset, SERCA, said, “The RFA process fails economically and environmentally and is out of step with current climate pressures.” She continued: “The value of carbon in the forests could be accounted for; to fund jobs in forest landscape restoration and increase jobs in eco-tourism.”

Grahame Douglas, NPA NSW, applauds the principles of the Great Southern Forest (GSF) campaign. He stated, “There are cultural reasons why people want to protect areas. The south eastern forests and elevated landscapes represent important and unique refugia for biodiversity.” He continued, “Climate change requires adaptation and mitigation; this means forest protection.”

Kim Taysom, NPA, added, “Our forests are Australia’s finest asset: they are the heart and lifeblood of our country and need protection.”

Dr Rosemary Beaumont said, “The GSF will safeguard our forests, foster Indigenous involvement in forest management, lift regional employment, and protect biodiversity and wildlife.”

Paul Payten, National Trust, noted, “Native forests are a part of our heritage which need to be protected in perpetuity and not sold off to overseas’ buyers at a loss.”

Mr Douglas added, “We need to stop woodchipping and deliver outcomes for biodiversity, clean water, clean air, rich soils, climate, spiritual healing and enlightenment”. He proposed, “Why are we subsidising a sector which is causing so much damage to the natural environment?”

That is the very question GSF supporters are now asking the State Government.

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