

Contents

Legal case for owl protection	1
Bob Brown Foundt'n Award. Graffitied one log load	2
Fire - a new era?	3
Logging increases fire severity. Logging offered to solve bushfire threat.	4
Lancefield fire investigation – a whitewash? \$300M payout to black Saturday victims	5
VicForests caught logging rainforest, on \$5.5M welfare, sell whole logs to China!	6
Minister Pulford what - underlies her lies?	7
Nature Notes	8
Woodchipping - its rise and demise	9
Forests as carbon stores - news	10
'Shorts' - news in brief	11
Biomass - burning koalas for a cuppa	12
Abbott's RET plan & forest furnaces	13
Melb brick kilns to burn EG forests. UK's biomass experience. Latest on green certification.	14
Our Grey-headed Flying Fox colony. How to help.	15
Forests Forever. What EEG has been up to.	16



EEG's 4th legal case Owls get 2,000ha set aside

The 2014 bushfires destroyed much of the protected habitat of our threatened forest owls. In July, the case brought by Environment East Gippsland challenged logging in the remaining unburnt older forests. The out of court settlement was relatively good for owls, but the department is yet to meet all the settlement terms.



Photo: David Hollands

This 10 month case sought to enforce the state government's obligations to protect three threatened owl species - the Sooty, Masked and Powerful Owls. We argued that the government had failed to set aside the legal minimum habitat necessary for protection, and that bushfires in 2014 destroyed large areas of zoned owl habitat. Meanwhile, VicForests had plans to continue clearfelling unabated in areas where the rare owls had survived.

This is our 4th successful case against the government to compel it to comply with its own environment protection laws. The settlement has seen the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) and VicForests agree to:

- move nine stands of old growth forest off the logging schedule and into protection zones
- put a 4 year moratorium on 16 stands of prime owl habitat planned for clearfelling around the fire-zone and at Kuark forest.
- increase the size of all protected areas for owls that are below legal minima in East Gippsland.
- carry out expert research to help inform whether further protection is needed for owls after the major 2014 fires – as we maintain is needed.
- pay part of our considerable costs to bring this case to court.

It's good to see the government accept that more work needs to be done to ensure our large forest owls survive. We will be keeping

a close eye on the progress of the Department's work over the next year. More details: <http://tinyurl.com/osvxbpz>

Update

As part of the settlement terms EEG (along with GECO) talked owl zone extensions with DELWP in late August. After almost three hours we had shown that their proposed new zones had flaws. We also said their argument that logging needs had to be given equal weight in the spirit of the RFA, was an absurd claim. It is unsupported by law and cannot override their legal obligations to the owls. EEG will take this back to the courts if DELWP persists with this ridiculous idea.

The initial zone extensions were mostly inside reserves and parks, or extended into logging regrowth, while the adjoining preferred old growth habitat was set aside for logging!

The Planning Standards that inform how logging and conservation is carried out are clearly worded and are the law - owls must have *suitable habitat*. The RFA is not law, merely a nasty, obsolete agreement from 20 years ago that favoured a woodchipping free-for-all.

We hope to see decent revised zone extensions in the near future. For the owls' survival, this needs to be done correctly. A couple of media stories on the case can be read [here](#) and [here](#).

Jill

The Potoroo Review

This is the newsletter of Environment East Gippsland, Australia's longest running forest campaign group. We bring you the facts about forests and the environment that rarely make it to the mainstream media. We never worry about biting the bureaucracy's hand as it never feeds us. That means we rely totally on membership and donations to keep nipping at the heels of the planet-rapers.



Membership - \$20 or \$15 conc. (includes newsletter).

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www.facebook.com/EnvironmentEastGippsland

Coordinator - Jill Redwood

Tax deductible donations can be sent to us at the above address made out to EEG. Receipts will be issued promptly.

The Potoroo is an endangered 'mini kangaroo' which survives in East Gippsland's forests. It eats fungi, so digs a lot of dirt, and like us, is often threatened by loggers.

Articles which appear in the *Potoroo* are the opinions of the authors' and not necessarily those of EEG.

Printed on Cyclus 100% - made from 100% post consumer waste, de-inked and bleached (chlorine free process).



Jill's Jottings

The phone rang one night in August; it was Bob to tell me I'd won the Bob Brown Foundation's [Environmentalist of the Year Award](#)! I was both stonkered and stoked. What an high honour!

"For over three decades, Jill has been a campaign stalwart for the protection of East Gippsland forests and Australia's native forests. Jill is not only the coordinator of [Environment East Gippsland](#), she is also on the committee of the [Australian Forests and Climate Alliance](#) and has been an integral campaigner against [native forest biomass burning](#) in

Australia. Jill has put up with threats, intimidation and even the killing of her livestock, to bravely speak up for the forests. She has had a huge hand in greening the map of Victoria, including a pivotal court ruling against logging at Brown Mountain, and in protecting the habitat of endangered species like the long-footed potoroo, glossy black cockatoo and

the Powerful Owl. This year EEG won a reprieve for 2,000 hectares of forest habitat for three species of owls. Besides her remarkable knowledge of the issues, Jill is a champion of organic food production, has a great sense of humour and is a fine role model for young Australian environmentalists." Bob Brown said.
Awww shucks.



Worlds best practice!?

The logging industry contractor who posted this boastful image on an environment group's Facebook page illustrates his industry's brazen contempt towards the community. It was posted on the same day EEG and others met with DELWP to talk about giant tree protection (21/10/15).

Is this "World's best practice" VicForests?! Even without the graffiti? This is why we need urgent interim measures for giant tree protection while prescriptions are developed. There are not many of these leviathans left out there! This one image is so powerful, it has permanently destroyed any industry or VicForests claim of 'sustainability' or 'environmental concern'.

[Email](#) or write to Premier Dan Andrews and ask he urgently protect all giant trees. Parl. House, Spring St, Melb.
daniel.andrews@parliament.vic.gov.au

EEG AGM

Sunday 29th Nov, 10am

Please contact
eeg@eastgippsland.net.au
 for venue details or ph 5154 0145
 All members welcome

WANTED!

Your *current* email address
 Out last E Bulletin update was on 6th Nov.
 If you didn't receive it, please contact Jill

eeg@eastgippsland.net.au

FIRE - a new era?

The review of the annual 5% burn target across the state admits gross failure and maximum environmental damage, so more effective risk reduction was recommended.

The Royal Commission's recommendation to burn 5% of our natural landscapes annually have finally been shown to be ineffective, costly and horrifically damaging to our biodiversity.

The review, set up soon after the Andrews Government came to power, did not go so far as to admit there was a lack of science or evidence behind the recommendation, but it did show that the hectare-based burn management scored a serious flunk on 12 fronts – a miserable 13/48.

The [recent review](http://tinyurl.com/qdndec4) (<http://tinyurl.com/qdndec4>) of the burn targets used 12 criteria to measure how effective the blunt hectare-based target is compared to the proposed risk-reduction target.

The hectare based burns scored 13/48 (a serious flunk!) while a risk-based target scored 40/48. This is the concern that biologists, EEG and thousands of others have had since day one.

In Feb 2015, Environment Minister Lisa Neville asked for a review of the 5% burn target. Tony Pearce, the recently appointed Inspector General of Emergency Management, released this report and its recommendations in April/May - a surprisingly quick turnaround time.

The review recommend a shift from just burning, to looking at more effective measures to keep people and assets safe, and the environment protected. Hopefully our wildlife and ecosystems can recover after five years of horrendous and relentless arson attacks across millions of hectares.

One worrying aspect was the suggestion that it could take another year of the old burning regime before they can implement the new direction of reducing risk rather than reducing our environment. They still need to develop their capability on risk-based planning, they say. With a score of 13/48, and a **maximum score for environmental damage**, maybe they'd be better off to cancel all burns until they develop their new program.

What the report said

The Review acknowledges that Recommendation 56 of the Bushfire Royal Commission had a simple broad 5%



This image is not a bushfire but one of the hundreds of government planned burns carried out every year across hundreds of thousands of hectares of public land. It effectively kills off most wildlife in these areas, making damp forests drier, more flammable and leaving them with very damaged ecosystems.

target policy to burn areas that “are not of equal value ... but remains silent on whether that land is treatable or untreatable”. p2.

In 2013, Neil Comrie the Bushfire Royal Commission Implementation Monitor stated clearly in his report that **the 5% target was not achievable, affordable or sustainable**. This was repeated in subsequent reports but ignored by the Baillieu/Napthine Government. A quarter to a third of a million hectares and its wildlife were destroyed annually as a result.

Risk reduction or biodiversity reduction

The Code of Fire Management has two primary objectives – one being to minimise the risk of bushfire and protect human life. The other, which has been totally neglected in the last 5 years, is:

To maintain or improve the resilience of natural ecosystems and their ability to deliver services such as biodiversity, water, carbon storage and forest products. p 30

How they measure ecosystem resilience is still a question. DELWP doesn't have the capacity despite there being a requirement to ensure such resilience. It's still ‘in development’.

The review stated that a risk-based approach was:

- More efficient at achieving fuel management
- Provides better incentives (not relying on a numbers game) and
- More adaptive, transparent, efficient and equitable.

After years of convincing the public that leaf litter is a fearsome killer, the Department fire managers have to now re-set their messaging to convince a terrified public that they were wrong, and there are now better ways to make communities safer. They mention shared responsibility with other agencies and encouraging people to be responsible for their own assets. There is also an acknowledgment of the serious health and economic impacts from planned burns' smoke.

They talk of community preparedness, shared responsibility, improved rapid first-strike attack, fire shelters and evacuation. We would also like to see them consider other options such as remote heat

sensing cameras installed at key points, enhancing the natural fire resistance of our forests, and crucially - removing financial incentives to keep fires going.

Another welcome sentence was:

...bushfire risk can be reduced through activities other than fuel management, such as land use planning controls, community education, suppression strategies, availability of fire refuges, or evacuations...

and that:

...recommendation 56 (5% burn target)... is only one of many relating to bushfire management.

There was a telling chart which showed the level of planned burns in relation to major bushfire events. There was no correlation that could be drawn between more burns and fewer bushfires.



Modelling by DELWP estimates that the **5% burn target reduces bushfire risk to people by about 18%**, whereas the **risk-based approach could achieve a 30% risk reduction** for the same cost.

The report also mentions the need to monitor water and air quality in relation to burns. There is a need for more reporting, information, performance measurements and reviews, and in a way that is

'accessible to the public' it says. All this would be conditional on funding and resources, of course – as always.

RMIT was engaged to carry out an independent analysis of the impact on the environment. Under the 5% target it said:

The primacy of the hectares burned target dis-incentivises incorporation of ecosystem resilience considerations... Ecosystem resilience can be actively harmed by large scale burns when they destroy micro-ecosystems and fauna lack alternative habitats within reach. Appendix 4, p11.

but...

Regarding 'fuel reduction' it also states that:

Given planned burning is the most effective approach to reducing the fuel hazard over large areas, the practice is likely to remain a significant component of the Bushfire Management Program. p46.

So while it states that there are many tools in the tool box and burning was a costly, relatively ineffective and an environmentally destructive tool, it will still be a significant part of annual fire safety measures. This was the one worrying sentence within an otherwise refreshing document. The only other criticism is that the review was five years too late. But at least Lisa Neville realised that such a re-think was needed.

Jill

Logging increases forests' flammability

New landmark research shows conclusively that **the deadly Black Saturday fires were more extreme due to logging regrowth.**

Scientists from Melbourne University and the ANU, Professor David Lindenmayer, Dr Chris Taylor and Dr Michael McCarthy, say the study showed the deadly blaze was more extreme where it burnt through thick, flammable logging regrowth.

The study is dynamite and is published in [Conservation Letters](http://tinyurl.com/oadgu66) - <http://tinyurl.com/oadgu66> Read more on [our website](http://tinyurl.com/q2lvzcr) <http://tinyurl.com/q2lvzcr> or at the [ABC news website](http://tinyurl.com/qxxny6h) <http://tinyurl.com/qxxny6h>.

A complementary study by Michael McCarthy can also be found [here](http://tinyurl.com/opnefme). <http://tinyurl.com/opnefme>

The environment gets a look-in

The review received 127 written submissions from groups or individuals. Most were very concerned at the impacts the burns policy has had on their local and the wider environment. The review showed that **under the criterion 'ensure the resilience of natural ecosystems and their services', the 5% burn target scores ZERO out of four.** Under the proposed new approach, it scores three out of four. Not only that, but it is also more effective at keeping people safe and provides the best return on money spent. A fire safety plan where ecosystem protection scores four out of four would be even better, though.

Thinning trials could create a ring of bonfires around towns

In early April, PM Abbott handed \$1.5 million to the logging industry to oversee a trail of a new 'bushfire mitigation' style of logging. This is a cynical attempt to dress up logging as fire control and gain another huge subsidy. Most likely it will allow access to previously out-of-bounds forests, will create *more* flammable logging debris zones around communities and won't be a publicly acceptable way to reduce fire threat

[Click here](http://tinyurl.com/nd6y9h4) - or type in <http://tinyurl.com/nd6y9h4>



Lancefield - Cobaw fires

The public has every reason to be sceptical of the outcome of the investigation the Victorian Government has commissioned into its escaped burn during the week of 6 October 2015. There is huge public outrage over the planned burn that turned into a wildfire and destroyed over 4,000 hectares, 4 homes, dozens of sheds, fences and pastures. The government-commissioned 'independent' investigator from WA was also being investigated for the very same failings in 2011-12 when he managed WA's most disastrous escape burn that destroyed 32 homes and nine chalets in the tourist region of Margaret River. Read more <http://tinyurl.com/q4oc76q>.

Mr Murray Carter seems an inappropriate appointment to oversee this Lancefield enquiry or quell the outrage. Will this be a careful cover-up under the guise of an independent investigation? It should have reported back by early November.

We are also hearing that the attitude of many DELWP employees in the local area is as appalling as we witnessed during the 2014 Goongerah-Deddick fires. We are hearing outrageous stories of DELWP vehicles and contractors bulldozing through people's private properties, knocking down valuable vegetation and trees that pose no risk, without so much as a *g'day*. This is profound disrespect. The more work DELWP and its contracted dozer drivers can find, the bigger their pay cheque. We seem to be witnessing another replay of the 'Red Gold' incentive; a motivator that dictates fire management. More details [here](#).



WINNER!

Literally!

Our intrepid East Gippsy photographer Jude Deland has won the Animal Behaviour section of the 2015 Australian Geographic Nature Photographer of the Year Competition! Congrats Jude! This was taken on the top of Mt Ellery earlier this year amongst the giant granite boulders, Alpine Ash and mist.



Jude has generously donated two limited-edition, signed copies of this photograph to help raise funds for EEG's work. If you'd like to make a bid, contact us or keep an eye on our facebook page.

\$300M given to victims of Black Saturday's Murrindindi fires

SPAusnet and the Victorian Government awarded \$300 million to claimants in the class action settlement, but neither party admitted liability for the Murrindindi bushfires that killed 40 people and burnt 500 houses.

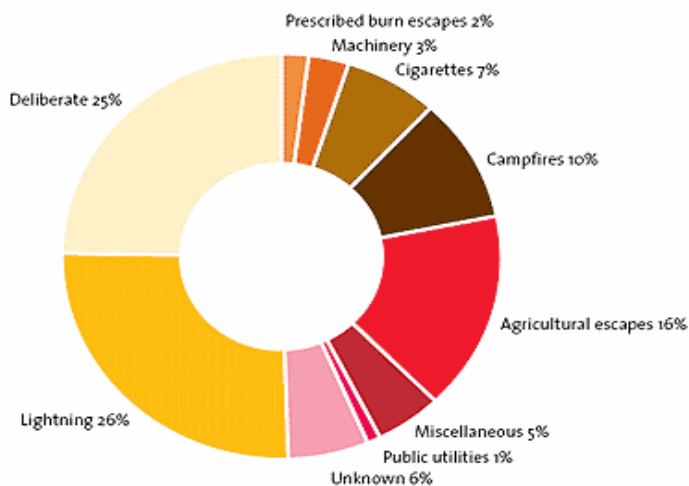
If only the courts could also consider the thousands of dead animals burnt to death. We believe the 2014 East Gippsland bushfires were managed in a way which prolonged the fire by

dragging it around the landscape for two months, by lighting up additional forests and heading home at 5pm. This kept fires burning all night at a time when it was much easier to extinguish.

The decision to ignore the most threatening fire, which later grew to engulf the Snowy National Park and part of the Errinundra, was an unforgivably negligent (and some say self-interested) decision. This was likely to be the main contributor to the loss of 170,000 ha of forest in the lucrative 7-week-long bushfire. Read more in [The Age article](#)

Jill

Bushfire causes in Victoria: 20-year average



Lightning causes only 26% of bushfires. Humans cause the rest.



Divide \$5.5million by 100 workers ...

This is an extremely generous welfare payment - \$55,000 per logging industry worker in East Gippsland! Every year! We all know that if the logging industry was a person, it would be the State's biggest vandal and welfare cheat. Only this one is protected, excused and offered more money.

Last May, a leaked VicForests three-year business plan exposed the fact that Victorian taxpayers are writing VicForests a \$5.5 million cheque annually under a "Community Service Obligation". This "Community Service" funds the destruction of the *communities'* forest in East Gippsland; hardly a 'service'.

We have been highlighting the loss for decades (with denials by VicForests since 2004). We thank the whistle-blower within for helping uncover the truth. East Gippsland's logging is mentioned as the most uneconomic region in the state, draining \$5.5 million from our taxes!

Jill/MyEnvironment

VicForests exports Aussie jobs

It seems that in all these years of crying 'jobs', VicForests and VAFI (industry lobby group) were really talking overseas jobs. They have lobbied the government to drop a local processing requirement before exporting whole logs, essentially getting rid of Australian jobs. This means that VicForests can now sell raw logs for peanuts into Chinese low grade markets. So our native forests are being packed into shipping containers bound for China and other countries for processing under a 'rescue plan' for VicForests! Read more [here](#):

ILLEGAL RAINFOREST LOGGING IN VICTORIA

VicForests' irrepressible habit of logging rainforest was again exposed in May-June 2015. Four breaches were reported, the worst being the illegal logging of over a hectare of protected cool temperate rainforest near Hensleigh Creek on the western edge of the Errinundra Plateau. It was well documented, measured, GPS'd and photographed by GECO volunteers. They detailed the breaches inside the 'Public Safety Zone' (keep out zone) during a weekend when no machinery was operating.

VicForests wriggled out of the internal investigation with its 'logging laws confuse us' excuse.

The department said there was too much damage to provide conclusive evidence to charge VicForests or contractors with illegal rainforest logging as "... *there is obviously ambiguity for us as the regulators but also industry and environmental groups; it leaves assessments open to interpretation.*" We thought the regulations were in fairly clear plain English.

The government report says there is no obvious reason why the rainforest canopy was destroyed and notes that 22 rainforest canopy trees had been pushed over, including Southern Sassafras and Gippsland Waratah. The investigators couldn't conduct a proper assessment of the site because the area had been badly disturbed they said.



If definitions and interpretation of English are still a problem after almost 30 years of 'accidental' rainforest logging, then a correction is extremely overdue. But how to correct attitudes?

Environment Minister Lisa Neville, who had the allegations investigated, admitted the destruction of rainforest species was unnecessary, and that there would be a review of management

practices as well as tightening the prescriptions to ensure no ambiguity.

Ministers at odds

In contrast, VicForests Minister Jaala Pulford fined those who reported the breaches \$440 each for entering the 'Public Safety Zone' to record the damage. This is despite the government realising that the logging was probably not fully compliant with the law and resulted in improvements to logging Codes. The charges are to be appealed.

We believe the correct action would be for VicForests and the contractors to be prosecuted and penalised - as any citizen would for vandalising protected property.

Note: GECO was short-listed for a United Nations environment award in late May for their research work in identifying rare wildlife and plant communities under threat in our forests. At the same time the VicForests' Minister Jaala Pulford, was taking [action to prosecute GECO](#) for the very same work the UN recognised as worthy of an award.



VicForests operates as an insolvent

How much longer can they get away with this?
It has cost us \$1.50 for every cubic metre of wood
VicForests has cut down and sold – from Healesville to
Mallacoota to Beechworth.

Last year, VicForests turned 10. It was set up to operate as a semi-corporate entity, that is, to make a profit and return a dividend to the public/government. It's us who own the forests they cut down. Since it was formed in 2004, VicForests has racked up a loss of at least \$22 million from its state-wide operations - yet VicForests claims a net profit of \$11.6 million over eight years (using creative book-keeping). But it has also received gifts of \$24.75 million from the government under various guises; that alone is a net cost to the taxpayer of over \$13 million.

It hasn't paid a dividend to its owners - you and me via the State Treasury - since 2007 despite claiming it makes a profit. In the financial year 2012-13 it claims to have made a profit of \$802,000 on \$106.3 million in revenue; extremely poor business performance.

The Japanese buyer of East Gippsland's woodchips, Nippon, stopped taking all but a token amount after Christmas last year (2014). Without this major market VicForests appears to be in even deeper doo-doo and could be trading as insolvent which is illegal.

Currently VicForests is only making a cracker by the continued pillaging of the Central Highland Ash forests – home to the critically endangered Leadbeaters Possum. The Maryvale pulp and paper mill, Australian Paper, is also owned by Nippon. They make the nasty Reflex copy paper. AP hasn't made a profit in the last four years and so has an uncertain future as well.



The Age <http://tinyurl.com/plqs44t>
The Herald Sun <http://tinyurl.com/pp5qwz6>



VicForests has allocated itself another 127 stands of EG forest to clearfell, despite already having over 1,000 on its 3 year plan! Minister Pulford justified this by saying it was handing back to the people of Victoria the same amount - but didn't say that most of it is now logged.

What underlies the Minister's lies?

Minister Jaala Pulford is responsible for VicForests. She's been caught with her *pants on fire again* trying to cover for it in reply to a question from Greens MP Sam Dunn in early September. Sam Dunn asked about VicForests' self-allocation of an additional 316 new stands of forest in Victoria to be clearfelled. The Minister said it was OK because the same number of hectares was also removed off logging maps. What she didn't say was that most of those coupes VicForests had already clearfelled and were now handing back to DELWP to manage! She said in Parliament:

I indicate to Ms Dunn that there are an additional 10,300 hectares and a reduction of 10,300 hectares. This is not all harvested (she means logged). VicForests harvests (logs) around 3,000 hectares a year...



VicForests already has around 1,000 stands of forest on its East Gippsland chopping block, but it added another 127 in August (the others are in the Central Highlands). It suffers an insatiable greed – a chronic chainsaw habit. To maintain it, this costs us all \$5.5M a year.

The red shapes on the above Google Earth image are proposed forest stands to be clear-felled in the next 3 years, most of them valuable mature and old growth forest.

Minister Pulford also said thousands of Victorian jobs were created by clearfelling our forests, when it was in fact about 500 or 1/20th of her claimed number. She has also claimed that no logs were being exported whole to China.

Is she deliberately lying or naïvely parroting the lies the industry feeds her?

Jill

NATURE NOTES



'Extinct' Frog rediscovered in East Gippsland

The Large Brown Tree Frog, (*Litoria Littlejohnii*) is a very rare species that hasn't been seen in East Gippsland for 20 years and thought possibly

extinct. In April a single frog was rediscovered in a roadside culvert ditch along Yalmy Road, south west of Bonang, which was moderately burnt in the 2014 bushfires. Not long after and not too far away, another three males were found in burnt forest on Jersey Road. The finds are good news but it is sobering to realise how many rare and threatened species were destroyed in those two months of fires across so much high value (unlogged) forest in the Parks.

Photo- Rena Gabarov, local Goongerah resident and research biologist heard the frog's call while spotlighting for Greater Gliders one night. It probably survived the fires in this roadside culvert ditch.



Remarkable find of rare fern

The bristly shield fern has never before been documented in East Gippsland - the closest being recorded near Melbourne and just south of Sydney. The

citizen scientists of GECCO (who do research work the Dept should be doing), have discovered the rare fern in the rich old growth forests at Kuark, planned for clearfelling. <http://tinyurl.com/nw67dny>

Firewood caution!

For those who care for the little things - please check that lump of wood before throwing it in the fire! Loads of these tiny young skinks hide out through winter in the cracks and under bark in firewood in your dry woodshed. Perfect habitat.



Aussie birds more advanced

We know Australian birds are special. DNA evidence shows that Australia provided the entire world with a majority of its songbirds. In his book *Where Song Began: Australia's Birds and How They Changed the World*, Tim Low looks at the relationship birds have with humans, how we interact, and sadly, how our destruction of their habitat is threatening the survival of many. Read more

[here](http://www.eastgippsland.net.au/media/where-birdsong-began) - <http://www.eastgippsland.net.au/media/where-birdsong-began>



Lyrebirds - forest gardeners

Lyrebirds are but one aspect of our forests' natural army of 'fuel reducers'. Read [The Age article](http://tinyurl.com/p7enatt) 'Not just a pretty tail: The lyrebird is a superb firefighter' <http://tinyurl.com/p7enatt>. Bandicoots, Potoroos, and other small diggers, hoppers and scratchers are all extremely important in turning over the forest's compost daily. Add to this workforce the insects and their larvae, termites and fungi that are constantly devouring leaves, twigs and even logs.



Sadly these effective and efficient natural fuel reducers are killed off, displaced or lose their cover and are eaten by foxes and cats every time the government land managers perform their burns.

The fires can be up

to many thousands of hectares per burn. To those with an ecological understanding these burns are destructive and counterproductive. To the government it's a way to give the public a false sense of security while performing broad scale eco-cide on our environment and fauna. Read more here - <http://tinyurl.com/mv9o4vt>

Rare East Gippy Koala found

A Koala was found in early February just south of Goongerah by a roads crew. This is VERY unusual as Koalas east of the Snowy are extremely rare and the original genetic pool thought to be extinct. Shooting and disease are believed to have almost wiped them out earlier last century. After the 2014 fires, any remnant populations would be even more unlikely.

Dog baiting and mammal decline in eucalyptus forests

Research shows that where dingoes are trapped and poisoned, the ecosystem changes for the worse. Read more [here](http://tinyurl.com/ode5k8l). <http://tinyurl.com/ode5k8l> Also a great little one minute [explanatory video](https://vimeo.com/117074364) of the importance of dingoes in forest ecosystems. <https://vimeo.com/117074364>

Woodchipping its rise and demise

Reflex paper's owner Nippon, receives millions

A secret deal by the former Coalition State Government to supply [the Japanese owned Australian Paper \(AP\)](#) with timber at a discounted fixed price, has shed further light on the financial vulnerability of the Maryvale Mill. AP, which makes

Reflex paper, has devoured the Central Highlands forests for decades. Earlier this year AP was handed \$10 million worth of free logs because it was unable to make a profit! The story from The Age is here: <http://tinyurl.com/nhbr9pp>



A Department of Treasury briefing reveals the Australian Paper mill (owned by Nippon) had failed to hand over \$10 million that VicForests said it was owed for logs from our public forests. In a significant concession to settle the stoush - which was described by one well-placed industry source as "an exercise in corporate socialism" - former Minister for Agriculture Peter Walsh agreed to fix the price for the mill. <http://tinyurl.com/prz7nv6>

Victorian Greens MP Samantha Dunn is [calling for a full parliamentary enquiry](#) into the secret deal done between the government and the large pulp and paper mill in the Latrobe Valley. The deal protected AP from international competition. VicForests' secret deal locks in rock-bottom prices for our native forest logs. It's a state-sponsored environmental destruction scheme. "Why wasn't the secret deal discovered in the recent report of the Auditor General?" Sam Dunn asked.

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission may want to take a look at this anti-competitive behaviour. <http://tinyurl.com/opnbgt9>

World woodchipping grows!

But read on ...there are 145 woodchip ships working across the oceans and about 75% are Japanese owned. The global woodchip trade is increasing. New ships are being built bigger for greater cost efficiencies and most sail to China or Japan. *Plantations* across the world would be feeding a lot of these (see next story on Portland) but native forests will still make up some of the 36 million tonnes that will fill the ships this year.

Read more [here](#) - <http://tinyurl.com/qbyya7h>

The Portland good news story & VicForests meets a competitor!

The good news is that the 175,000 ha of blue gum plantations in western Victoria (the product of the failed MIS scams over the last decade or so) are now being bought up and amalgamated, logged, chipped and sent overseas via Portland in western Victoria. Portland is now the largest exporter of hardwood chips in the world with an expected 3 million plus tonnes going out in the coming year. Eden at its peak was 'only' exporting around 1.5 million tonnes.

The demand is so high a second ship loading facility is being built and the logging company is seeking an extra 60 truck drivers over the next couple of months - as a starter. The ABC news story link is here: <http://tinyurl.com/pkr5nab>

Plantation wood is much better quality than native forests, is far less controversial, has reliable supply volumes and doesn't need massive tax-payer subsidies. VicForests now has a serious competitor here and it's already away and running.



Portland is the largest export terminal for hardwood woodchips in the world, using blue gum plantations from the west.

Eden Chipmill news

After the Eden woodchip mill all but stopped taking chips from East Gippsland in December 2014, the Eden chipmill manager stated:

"...plantations in Vietnam, Thailand and Sth America produce cheaper chips with higher yields... crowding Australia out of its...once lucrative markets in Japan".

It wasn't the 'greenies', but markets, he said:

"Some...paper companies are...reluctant to take woodchips from Australian forests because of their contested environmental nature".

...which was *thanks to 'greenie' campaigns*. After Eden shut its gates to Victorian logs, VicForests managed to negotiate a contract in February to sell a smaller quantity to the chipmill. It will expire in December this year. In the meantime VicForests is feverishly looking for new customers to buy its massive volumes of 'waste' (ie. good trees that aren't wanted by sawmills). Sadly, the mill is still being fed from valuable NSW koala forests.

STANDING FOREST CARBON a climate and financial winner!

Two choices: a \$222 million carbon gain or a \$60 million logging loss. Not a difficult choice really.

As well as everything else, trees are carbon credit generators. Forests should be a major part of climate action targets. The emergence of carbon markets offers a non-destructive and profitable alternative to gain income from forests. We must be careful, though, that this does not give polluters an easy loophole to keep polluting.

The Australia Institute recently released its [investigation](#) into carbon credits vs logging profits.

Basically it proves that if native forests continue to be logged, the industry and taxpayers will lose millions. If the forests are used for carbon credits, they are likely to return a huge profit for the government and community.

Professor Andrew Macintosh at the ANU said the most commonly overlooked source of carbon abatement is native forests, which is currently *excluded* from the carbon pricing scheme and the government's offset scheme, the Carbon Farming Initiative. This is despite the fact that **stopping the logging of public native forests is one of the cheapest ways to reduce Australia's emissions**. For the past two decades, the native forest sector has been in decline due to pine competition, the global financial crisis and now our woodchips are less competitive on the world market.

All states that log native forests do so at a huge loss. You can read more in [The Conversation](#) or <http://tinyurl.com/qyeyus5>

The economic activity from logging native forests now accounts for a mere 0.08% of Australia's Gross Domestic Product. (ABARES)

Native forests - our emissions target solution

The Renewable Energy Target now includes industrial scale burning of wood from our forests. But a more climate- and biodiversity-positive use of Australia's native forests would be to leave them as carbon stores. Read more in The Conversation <http://tinyurl.com/p9n8vub>

While governments agonize, investigate and calculate how to reduce Australia's emissions by almost 26% on 2005 levels, they could very immediately and effectively reduce emissions by between 10-18% - by ending forest clearing. It'd be cheap and save years of dithering with costly pie in the sky research. This CO₂ loss is equivalent to the amount that Australia's entire transport industry generates annually.



Victorian forest carbon worth \$30M standing

Thirty million dollars a year could be the reward to Victorians if logging was stopped in the Central Highlands and tied in with the Coalition's emissions reduction fund.

A confidential brief prepared for the Federal Environment Minister Greg Hunt, found ending logging in these forests would save about 3.2 million tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions a year. Any CO₂ emissions saved from ceasing logging could be turned into revenue under the Abbott government's \$2.55 billion emissions reduction fund.

An excellent article on this can be read here in [The Age](#) or <http://tinyurl.com/nuwkcf2>



The carbon loss from Australia's land clearing and logging (and the post-logging burns as seen here) would meet half the planned target for CO₂ reduction.

Review of state enviro laws

Lisa Neville MP and Daniel Andrews are setting up reviews of the EPA Act, the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act (FFGA), land clearing regulations and the Biodiversity Strategy. All have been ineffective for decades. There is only one direction they can now go (surely!). We do hope we have a government that is serious about progressive reform of our environment laws. Read more [here](#).

Shorts



Feral cattle cull in Snowy River National Park

Over several months skilled shooters were airlifted into remote areas of the Snowy River National Park to destroy a herd of wild cattle that had been breeding up for decades.

Parks Victoria said a small herd of nine cattle remained in the park and there are plans to remove those in the near future. The remote, rugged sites were far from roads. Local beef farmers are believed to have let their stock graze the park in earlier days.

Myanmar jails 153 Chinese illegal loggers for life

Take note VicForests! A group of 153 illegal loggers were [given life in jail in Myanmar](#). They were arrested in January in Kachin state, close to the Chinese border, during a military operation to crack down on illegal logging. China has expressed concern about the severity of the sentences. Isn't it lucky VicForests carries out its operations in a corrupted and compromised developed country.



DINGO AS STOCK GUARDIAN

From a Facebook post...

"So i have a small farm, produce hay and have some livestock. Had a problem with wallabies and wild dogs taking live stock. I adopted a dingo bitch as a 3 month old. Over the last year the wild dogs taking live stock has gone and the wallaby problem is in check. Produced 900 bales last year and 1200 the year after getting the dingo. During the year we were given a calf. We were initially scared that the dingo would take her, woke up in the morning to find her curled up with the calf. She spends the day sleeping in the chook pen with the chickens, all from a dingo that spent the first 3 months in the wild and still doesn't like human contact much."

Will the price of gas kill off the Maryvale pulp mill?

Natural gas prices are set to possibly treble within a couple of years. The good news is that many dirty industries that rely on gas as a cheap fuel source could become unviable. Maryvale pulp and paper mill is the biggest gas user in the state and could have to find an extra \$30-45 million annually. They are in a cold sweat over the huge hike in power prices in the near future, which could see their power bill rise by up to \$40 million a year. Read more [here in The Latrobe Valley Express](#). AP currently produces some of its own power generated by burning its waste 'goop' - the woodchip processing waste and slurry left over from paper making. It could also use this to generate the heat needed and replace gas-fired heating.

Costly profits

According to a new report for the UN, almost no industry is profitable if you include environmental costs. Sometimes the environmental costs vastly outweigh revenue, meaning that these industries would be constantly losing money had they actually been paying for the ecological damage and strain they were causing. Taxpayers, wildlife and the environment pays. More here: [exposingtruth.com](#)

Gunns liquidators demand loggers give back payments

Logging contractors in Tasmania and interstate face potential bankruptcy because of legal action being taken by the liquidators of the failed logging giant Gunns. The giant logging company lost almost \$1 billion in 2011/2012. It's believed some of Gunns' creditors (loggers and carters) were given favoured treatment and big payments just before the collapse. The liquidators are now taking legal action to get the money back and the industry is not happy. More here from the ABC: <http://tinyurl.com/qzwfudj>



Northern Quolls – fed toad sausages

Listed as Critically Endangered due to the spread of the poisonous Cane Toad, the progeny from small rescued populations are now ready to release back to the wild, but how to stop them eating the toads again? [Dion Wedd, at Territory Wildlife Park](#) said they are trialling aversion therapy - toad sausages that will make the quolls sick but not kill them.

They call it 'BIOMASS'- ACRE

This is the most serious threat our native forests now face. Biomass is an even greater threat than woodchipping, planned burning or even having DELWP manage fire.

Biomass is the term used to describe biological matter, but recently it means the incineration of industrial, agricultural, forest or other products to generate electricity or heat.

Around the world, native forests (some previously uncommercial) are being cut down at an alarming rate to supply this demand. It's become the latest [climate fraud](#) and claims to produce 'renewable energy'.

Australian proponents of biomass (coal and native forest logging industries) are now also positioning themselves to use our native forests for burning - domestically or for export to Europe and Asia which have a growing appetite for wood to fuel their furnaces. As coal and nuclear are increasingly on the nose, dirty operators are simply looking towards forest furnaces, and plying their lies and spin to comfort the public that it's clean and renewable!

Eastern Vic biomass plans

Rather than shut down the filthiest power station in the country, we could be seeing the logging and coal industries holding hands to create the most polluting, climate destroying 'renewable' electricity imaginable! The dirtiest power station could become [even dirtier](#).

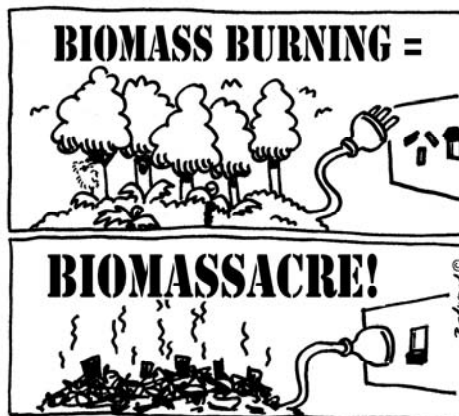
Hazelwood, Australia's most polluting power station has been quietly planning to re- cloak itself as a 'clean energy operator' by burning East Gippsland's forests in with coal. It's called co-generation. They don't need to do more than throw chunks of wood in the furnaces. No processing needed. Hazelwood has been given a permit to burn native

forest wood by the Clean Energy Regulator, a Federal body that regulates the Renewable Energy Target. This doesn't mean it will – but the Feds have opened that door.

Nathan Trushell from VicForests says that at least in the short- to medium-term, biomass burning at Hazelwood is not the priority. "It may or may not be commercially feasible right now, but certainly I think that's where the opportunities exist". ABC - <http://tinyurl.com/o2bz2ks>

In an indication of ongoing interest in biomass for its Hazelwood plant, GDF Suez in October last year [advertised for a 'coal and ash operator' who would also 'participate in biomass trials'](#).

Before the Abbott government added biomass burning into the RET legislation and defined it as renewable, the practice would have been uneconomical. Forest furnaces can now claim renewable energy certificates (subsidies) under the RET, thereby making it viable. But even with this assistance it could fall over. It's a watch and wait situation.



Shun science - a costly way to boil the kettle

Science shows us that burning wood is far more polluting than burning coal for the electricity generated. On the contrary, standing trees and forests are the most effective, long term carbon capture and storage mechanisms we have, and cutting them down to burn is a double whammy against the climate. The [UK experience](#) <http://tinyurl.com/o4rb2x5> teaches us that biomass electricity is more costly as well, meaning consumers pay more. Include in the calculations: the

carbon cost of heavy machinery used to log forests, the remaining unwanted forest plants burnt on site, logs trucked or shipped, logs chipped, dried and pelletised, then transported to the power plants to burn to create steam to drive the generators to make electricity. What a costly way to boil the kettle! There are reasons [too numerous to mention](#) <http://tinyurl.com/nj3gqgqo> as to why forest furnaces are an insane proposition on many counts. At the UN Climate negotiations recently, a [Working Paper](#) <http://tinyurl.com/ncwbvee> showed that burning forests for electricity is not carbon neutral. It was released by Chatham House, The Royal Institute of International Affairs, but we know our Federal Government is selective in its use of facts or science.

Where to now?

All terms associated with 'Clean Energy', such as green power, carbon-neutral, renewable and so on, have now been dirtied under this legislation. All renewable energy is effectively contaminated and not to be trusted by consumers.

Households and businesses should demand to know if their power supplier is able to categorically prove it will not be selling 'dead koala power' to their customers. The appalling image of native wildlife being incinerated to power a toaster in the morning has good potential for a consumer boycott campaign.

Our state governments also have the ability to ban the use of native forest wood as power station fodder if they choose to. EEG has formally asked the State Labor Government if it will follow federal Labor and oppose the burning of any native forest wood for industrial power generation. We've not received a reply after three months.

Whatever strategy or target is chosen, there will be a stronger campaign than ever to kill off this outrageous new threat to East Gippsland's and Australia's forests. The RET legislation has at least had the positive effect of strongly uniting forest campaign groups from across the country.

Jill



Wood pellets

Pellets are small extruded bits of processed tree, looking like chook pellets. They are very

dry, easy to handle and burn hot. They are how most wood burning electricity generators prefer their trees.

Gippsland Logging is a company currently building a pellet plant in Morwell, apparently for the domestic market. Home heating and cooking stoves using pellets are a new concept in Australia but we hear they plan to sell these as well. It seems like a big investment in a small-scale trial for something untried. Who knows what might grow from this!

Forests - into the furnaces! thanks to a new federal govt law

Earlier this year (Feb/March), combined environment groups across Australia spent weeks trying to educate politicians in the Senate. The groups wanted to knock out the Abbott Government's plan to define burning forests in furnaces as 'renewable energy'. Despite lobbying, despite thousands of emails and phone calls from the public to the independent cross-benchers, and despite an [alert to cross benchers from 40 scientists](http://tinyurl.com/q88cbmz), the Senate passed the Renewable Energy Target (RET) legislation at 11pm on 23rd July 2015. There were 41 for and 14 opposed (being the Greens and four independents, Senators Day, Wang, Leyonhjelm and Lazarus). The transcript of those last hours of debate is [here](http://tinyurl.com/q88cbmz) <http://tinyurl.com/q88cbmz>

Besides being extremely weak, it also has some nasty components in there. It allows the fuelling of electricity generators with native forest trees - not just 'waste' and 'offcuts' as the industry spin doctors claim. As 'renewable energy', the logging and power industries can now grab a slice of the limited financial support that should be earmarked for true renewables.

Various amendments were voted down one after the other. Greens wanted to allow States to set their own renewable energy targets, but this was voted down by *Labor and the Liberals*. They wanted a Senate inquiry, and the burning of native forests excluded as a biomass source - both were voted down. Senator Glenn Lazarus wanted any native forest wood used to only be sourced from FSC certified logging operations; again voted down.

The Labor beast

Labor and the Greens failed to scrap wood waste burning after the then Abbott government did a deal with four anti-wind farm independent Senators to

establish an obstructive wind farm commissioner (to look into what some call wind-farm generated hypochondria). This was [in return for their votes](http://tinyurl.com/pwx3jfb). More here: <http://tinyurl.com/pwx3jfb>

Labor could have made native forest burning a deal-breaker. When amendments to remove native forest burning from the target failed, Labor went ahead and voted for it anyway; so much for their weeks of opposition and hand-wringing. However, they did send a signal to the market place that Labor does not support native forest wood burning in the energy mix. This should at least indicate to investors that all this could change in the future under Labor and so would be a risky investment.

Logging thrown a lifeline

This dirty deal between Labor and the Coalition has effectively thrown a lifeline to the dying native forest logging industry. Claims that the wood fuel will just be saw logging 'waste', 'branches' or 'offcuts' are blatant lies. Native forest saw logging (and now woodchipping) is a 'dead man walking'. There will soon be hardly enough genuine waste to boil the billy let alone power electricity generators here and overseas. The gathering and transporting of branches and twigs is an absurd notion; only whole logs would be carted out. Senators Janet Rice, Larissa Waters and Christine Milne consistently tried to draw out the acting Minister for the Environment, Senator Birmingham, on many such details, but he performed the Coalition's duck and weave dance, refusing to provide any clear answers. Here in East Gippsland, and thanks to a [leaked VicForests document](http://tinyurl.com/qimgnej) <http://tinyurl.com/qimgnej>, we know it is uneconomic to log for sawlog alone, and that only a tiny market exists for woodchips, and the only possible saviour would be burning forests as electricity furnace fuel to keep industrial scale logging going. Their other fallback plan is selling whole logs to China!

No forest is safe

At least the woodchip industry was fussy about the species cut down and chipped for paper making, but anything that burns will now be in their sights as furnace fodder. Bloodwoods, ironbarks, box and so on.

If any electricity retailer begins to sell 'dead koala power' it will become the target of a boycott campaign. We can also keep reminding the state Labor Government that their federal counterparts are opposed to burning native forest wood for power generation. Although Labor's Bill Shorten made a show of opposing the inclusion of burning native forest wood in the RET legislation, he not long afterwards took a back-step on that position. Put simply, they can't be trusted - in or out of power.

Jill

Take Action: Please ask your local state Labor MP if they will also oppose the use of burning native forests for electricity generation in Victoria.

EG's forests as furnace fuel? A 20 year licence in East Gippsland – for burning trees

Just before the last election (Nov 2014), the state Coalition government awarded sawmill company Auswest, a 20 year licence to keep logging East Gippsland's forests. Auswest is owned by Brickworks, the company that was caught up in the NSW ICAC corruption scandal over Liberal Party donations. It has announced it will be using 'waste' wood from its two East Gippsland mills to power their brickworks in Melbourne. This would gain them an 'emissions reduction' grant from the Coalition government under their Direct Action plan. Read the original article from the [Financial Review \(PDF\)](http://tinyurl.com/q6xq5vj) <http://tinyurl.com/q6xq5vj>

How world's biggest green power plant is actually INCREASING greenhouse gas emissions and Britain's energy bill

This link <http://tinyurl.com/o4rb2x5> takes you to a fascinating tale of corruption, false promises, forest destruction, increased pollution and lies centred around the UK Drax biomass power plant. It's a path many Australian politicians and industry lobbyists are taking us down enthusiastically.

Labor scatters poison to please National Party voters

Since mid October, the Dept of Endless Lies, Wildfires, and Platitudes, DELWP, will have aerially broadcast 4,000 poison 1080 meat baits across public land in Gippsland and the North East for a second year running. It might not kill many dogs (who are very wise to these tricks), but could be taking out the last remnants of endangered quoll populations, meat eating birds and possibly young goannas.

We are told there are no quolls in the area, but if it's too remote to ground bait, how can they survey for quolls to prove they don't exist? Given quolls can roam over thousands of hectares, it'd be like finding a needle in a haystack even if they did decent surveys.

The poisoning will be in the Angora/Cobungra, Bindi, Wonangatta and Punchen Budweid areas in EG, and across the NE in the Wabba, Bullhead and Burrowa areas.

The department media release justified aerial baiting due to the "remoteness (and) proximity to private land...". So if it's near farmland, how can it be remote?

Green certification - a can of vipers

VicForests abandons green label

VicForests was trying to gain an eco-label for its logging practices under the international Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) label. It had a snowball's hope in hell before, but now that the Federal Govt has declared the Leadbeaters Possum critically endangered, it's more like a *snow flake's* hope in hell. VicForests said:

"Following the listing of the Leadbeaters Possum as critically endangered, (we) made the decision to delay undergoing an audit ... it would be premature to go ahead ... (need) more time to understand the important role VicForests ... play in ... recovery of the Possum ... remain committed to seeking FSC certification ..."

Realistically, unless the FSC certification system is further compromised, VicForests has almost no chance of gaining this eco label. Read more [here](http://tinyurl.com/pxsoce2) <http://tinyurl.com/pxsoce2>.

EG mill now goes for FSC certification

Montana sawmill in Nowa Nowa East Gippsland, has applied for a permit to build a biomass burner to generate electricity. It has also decided to try for a green certification label for its operations. The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is the label it is trying to gain certification under. As one of the environmental stakeholders EEG has been consulted on its plans. We have been unimpressed with the proposal, and along with TWS and GECO detailed the many flaws we found in their proposal to the auditor. The plan Montana intends to use to identify and protect High Conservation Value forests will simply defer to VicForests' management (see above)!



Their auditor is SCS. It will check the planned operations, but if they are relying on VicForests' management system to inform their protection of valuable forests, Montana should be denied their FSC certification. That's if all processes are honest and thorough. There are endless examples of appallingly bad FSC certified logging across the world and in Australia. The recent episode in WA is just one example. Read more [here](http://tinyurl.com/qexoshs).

WA FSC logging challenged by env group

The audit of the WA Forest Products Commission's logging regime was given an FSC certificate by an independent auditor, but is now being challenged by environment groups for the suspect methods used in the process. More on the WA case here: <http://tinyurl.com/qexoshs>

Grey-headed Flying Fox breeding colony – a Bairnsdale treasure



The maternal winter breeding colony of 6,000 threatened Grey-headed Flying Foxes along the Mitchell River at Bairnsdale is a much loved attraction for many people. Sited right on the river's edge by the walkway and picnic areas, it's in a perfect position and only a block away from the main street's cafés. But not all appreciate them. Some residents of the adjacent houses have been pressuring the shire to remove the colony.

A listed threatened species at both state and federal levels, they roost during the day in a stretch of large old poplar trees along the Mitchell River. This is also the habitat for the larger summer colony that fluctuates from 6,000 to 60,000 individuals. As a winter roost it is now a very important site for a maternal colony of pregnant females which were heavily pregnant in July.

At the end of July the **East Gippsland Shire** carried out the **demolition of around a third of their summer roost trees** (below).



The work was extremely close to the pregnant females. If stressed too much they can abort. As the species is listed under the Federal EPBC Act, the Shire had to gain approval

for the interference and write a management plan.

We believe there were a number of permit conditions that were breached. Explanations have been sought.

The Shire's ultimate aim is to remove the entire stretch of the Flying Fox roost trees. As the bats are extremely susceptible to heat stress, this bend on the river in the tall shady poplars is perfect for them. The Shire was warned that without an alternative roost site provided, they could relocate to the hospital or school gardens – creating a genuine problem and possibly costing the Shire (ratepayers) many millions.

Rather than think creatively, the Council and the Planning officer can only offer an 1800s' solution – demolish and destroy. Instead it could cash in on an amazing natural spectacle which few people have seen, and handy to coffee shops and the town centre. Helping neighbours net trees and provide a covered walkway are just some other possible ideas.

Here are a few things you can do

Contact:

Your power retailer

and ask them to give an unequivocal assurance that they will not purchase electricity generated from burning native forests. If they can't, you'll consider moving to a greener retailer and tell all of your friends as well.



- When will he adopt the recommendations of the review into effectiveness of the 5% burn targets
- Will he ensure that no native forest logs are exported whole to China.
- Will he protect the forests where the Large Brown Tree Frog was rediscovered and survey in other forests nearby before any logging.
- That the 10,000ha of logged forest that has never grown back be urgently funded for regen works.

Premier Dan Andrews

daniel.andrews@parliament.vic.gov.au

cc Env Minister Lisa Neville

Lisa.neville@parliament.vic.gov.au

and ask:

- that he quickly moves to protect not only large old trees immediately, but remaining old growth forests as well.
- he bans the burning of native forest wood to generate electricity as his Federal counterparts have.
- he calculates into Victoria's greenhouse gas emissions targets the significant role our forests play.

Ag Minister Jaala Pulford

jaala.pulford@parliament.vic.gov.au

suggest that assisting farmers to establish electric fences would be more cost effective than plane drops of deadly poison over public lands.

East Gippsland Shire Planning

officers feedback@egipps.vic.gov.au

urge them to protect remaining Flying Fox roost trees until equally mature suitable trees are available at the same site.

Treasurer Tim Pallas—

tim.pallas@parliament.vic.gov.au

Ask that the \$5.5M given to VicForests a year to log EG forests instead go to help the environment.

Choose plantation timber or recycled for building and renovations.

Only use forest friendly copy paper <http://www.eastgippsland.net.au/paper>

Tell the world! Write letters, call talk-back radio, tell friends ...
<http://www.eastgippsland.net.au/tell-the-world>


Visit our how you can help webpage for more ideas. <http://www.eastgippsland.net.au/how-to-help>



What else has EEG been up to?

- ◆ We sit on the East Gippsland fire Roundtable set up by DELWP.
- ◆ We are part of the newly established Forest/Industry taskforce the Andrews Government has set up (see below).
- ◆ We are constantly questioning actions which appear to be at odds with government policy or legislation. Many letters are in the pipeline.
- ◆ Invited to speak at various forums and meetings.
- ◆ Using social media to highlight both the outrages and beauty of East Gippsland's forests (our most popular post received over 90,000 hits)
- ◆ We are actively involved with the Australian Forests and Climate Alliance.
- ◆ Gather and promote the science which is showing planned burns are ineffective. We work to turn around the mindset of the media, government and public on this ancient but widely parroted myth.
- ◆ Working with our legal team to decide which will be our next target issue (plenty to choose from!)
- ◆ Talking to media to generate interest in environmental stories.

Remember - pleeez update your email address with us :-) or you'll miss the party when we win!



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Photo credit: Jodie DeLeland

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VICTORIAN NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION
The part of nature

www.vnpa.org.au



www.eastgippsland.net.au

Logging Industry/Forests Taskforce - optimism

As a way to break through decades of conflict and historically poor performance of the native forest logging industry, Victorian environment groups are participating in a taskforce set up by the new Victorian Labor Government. It will operate similar to the Tasmanian Forest Agreement process between conservation groups and industry, with government leaving the room to allow us to sort it out. The Tasmanian disaster gave us good lessons in how *not* to do it though. It's funded by the govt, has agreed terms of reference and is aiming for a win-win outcome in 12-18 months. EEG is on the caucus.

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