



**Nature Conservation Council**

The voice for nature in NSW

**Nature Conservation Council of NSW**

**ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2016**

**Saturday & Sunday  
22nd & 23rd October, 2016**

**University of Sydney Law School  
New Law School Building (F10)  
Eastern Avenue, Camperdown Campus**

**MINUTES**

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## E. FORESTRY ISSUES

### Motion 2016/E1

#### The Great Southern Forest proposal

*Submitted by the South East Region Conservation Alliance and National Parks Association of NSW*

**THAT** the Nature Conservation Council of NSW endorse the Great Southern Forest proposal for the NSW and Federal Governments to:

- a) end native forest logging of over 400,000 hectares of public land in the carbon dense Southern Forest Region; and
- b) implement a carbon emissions reduction fund linked to jobs in native forest landscape restoration, wildlife protection, and boost jobs in nature-based tourism.

**BACKGROUND:** The Great Southern Forest (GSF) campaign emanates from the south-east region of NSW and is supported by the National Parks Association of NSW, the South East Region Conservation Alliance and the National Trust Far South Coast Branch. The proposal presents a plan to manage public native forests in the Southern Forest Region of NSW for carbon capture as opposed to native forest logging and to fund this change with forest carbon credits.

The GSF will protect and connect forests and link national parks, state forests and private land. It is not a proposal for further national parks but promotes protection of these forests and their natural carbon reserves. State Forests comprise over 400,000 hectares from Nowra in the north, to Eden in the south and inland to the Tumut region.

Expiry of the Southern Forest Region's 20-year Regional Forest Agreements (RFA) in 2019 and 2021 is the catalyst for re-evaluating loss-making, logging-based forest management. Major economic and environmental changes have occurred since the RFA process began.

It is now even more obvious that woodchipping is inappropriate for our native forests:

- Logging of native forests for woodchips in south-east NSW has been historically loss making and is in decline, unlike the established pine plantation sector. (The Forestry Corporation of NSW has lost \$79 million from native hardwood operations over the last seven years).
- Our native forests are hugely carbon dense. Including this carbon in Australia's emissions reduction program could provide carbon credit funding of \$20 million or more per year. This could fund over 500 jobs in forest restoration and wildlife protection, and expand jobs in nature-based and eco-tourism.
- Logging causes wildlife habitat destruction. Short logging cycles cause dramatic declines in numbers of many unique native mammals, birds and plants. Water catchments, soil, and wildfire preparedness need to be valued for survival.
- Landscape aesthetics and natural beauty are vital for nature-based tourism.
- Climate change threatens forest habitat and biodiversity. The GSF will help reduce forest fragmentation and thus equip forests with the connectedness

and resilience to withstand a changing climate; factors not considered when the RFA were signed 20 years ago.

The GSF proposal highlights the potential for these biodiverse, carbon rich forests to transition from a loss-making and detrimental activity into a sustainable, environmentally creditable and profitable 21st century enterprise. For more info go to: <http://www.greatsouthernforest.org.au>

*Moved: Bronte Somerset*

*Seconded: Grahame Douglas*

**CARRIED**

**PROPOSED ACTION:** NCC, in collaboration with the established partnership of SERCA, NPA and National Trust South Coast, write to the NSW and Commonwealth Governments in line with the motion.

## **F. National Parks, Protected & Natural Areas**

### **Motion 2016/F1**

#### **Protecting Sydney's drinking water supply**

*Submitted by the Parramatta Climate Action Network*

**THAT** the Nature Conservation Council of NSW urge the NSW government to support legislation that will ensure full protection of the state's water supplies from pollution, such as that being discharged by Centennial Coal from the Springvale Coal Mine into the Coxs River which flows into Sydney's drinking water supply.

**BACKGROUND:** Springvale Coal Mine north of Lithgow was granted a 13 year extension last year by the Planning Assessment Commission, which also allowed the mine's operator, Centennial Coal to discharge polluted mine water into the Coxs River.

Unfortunately a case supported by the Blue Mountains Conservation Society, Nature Conservation Council of NSW, Colong Foundation for Wilderness, Lithgow Environment Group, NPA and ACF was rejected on 13 September 2016 by the Land and Environment Court.

Reportedly Sydney's catchment is the only publicly-owned drinking water area in the world where coal mining is allowed. As the Coxs River is a major source of Sydney's drinking water supplies, the court decision shows that the NSW catchment laws are totally inadequate and must be strengthened.

*Moved: Annie Nielsen*

*Seconded: Antony Lewis*

**CARRIED**

**PROPOSED ACTION:** NCC to write to the NSW Premier.