

To the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (the Department) Staff,

UPDATE: Rainforest Coinciding with Linear Reserve - 832-502-0017_Puggaree Road_Cabbage Tree Creek

Earlier this week we alerted you to a rainforest logging breach within the "Football" coupe 832-502-0017 on Puggaree Road in East Gippsland. We have further concerns about continued logging in this area that may be occurring in breach of the regulatory framework.

Analysis of the ecological vegetation class spatial dataset NV2005_EVCBCS shows that modelled rainforest is present within and adjacent to the coupe and that this modelled rainforest coincides with a Linear Reserve Special Protection Zone (DETAILNO: P-832-04-13) and that the rainforest stand extends beyond this Linear Reserve.

An inspection of aerial and satellite imagery demonstrates that the likely presence of rainforest vegetation in this area also coincides with and extends beyond the Linear Reserve detailed above.

Neither the modelled rainforest extent nor the likely presence of rainforest identified from aerial and satellite imagery have been included in the Special Protection Zone and neither have been afforded a 100m buffer.

Section 4.6.4.1 of the Planning Standards for Timber Harvesting in Victoria's State Forests (2014) requires a 100 m buffer on this stand of rainforest.

4.6.4.1 - Where rainforest stands coincide with linear reserves, include in the SPZ the rainforest stand plus a 100m buffer. Exceptions may apply where an alternative logical boundary exists within the buffer, for example an existing road. Avoid road construction across linear reserves containing rainforest wherever practicable.

Preliminary analysis of the rainforest extent information described above in conjunction with logging activity and coupe demarcation location data shows that it is highly likely that logging activities have already occurred within 100m of the full extent of this rainforest stand and that further logging activity is planned within 100m of the rainforest stand.

A full investigation, including additional on ground inspection, of the extent of rainforest within and adjacent to this coupe should be undertaken as a matter of urgency.

Please see the map included at the end of this document for guidance as to the location of the rainforest and logging activities outlined above.

For such an investigation to occur VicForests should be restrained by the Department from logging in this coupe until the full extent of rainforest is delineated and a 100m buffer is placed on the rainforest stand that coincides with the Linear Reserve.

All circumstances where VicForests (and/or the logging contractors operating on behalf of VicForests) have conducted logging activities within rainforest or rainforest buffer areas, such as within coupe 832-502-0017, should be prosecuted by the Department as a breach of the regulatory framework governing logging operations in Victoria's State Forests.

Unless or until the rainforest buffer management actions described above have been fully complied with, logging in coupe 832-502-0017 has been or will be unlawful unless restrained by the Department.

Please inform our organisations if and when you will commence a full investigation into this matter, halt logging in this coupe and ensure the relevant regulatory requirements, as outlined above, will be fully enforced.

If the Department does not intend to take any action regarding the matters set out above please inform us of this decision as soon as possible and provide the Departments reasons for not taking the actions described above.

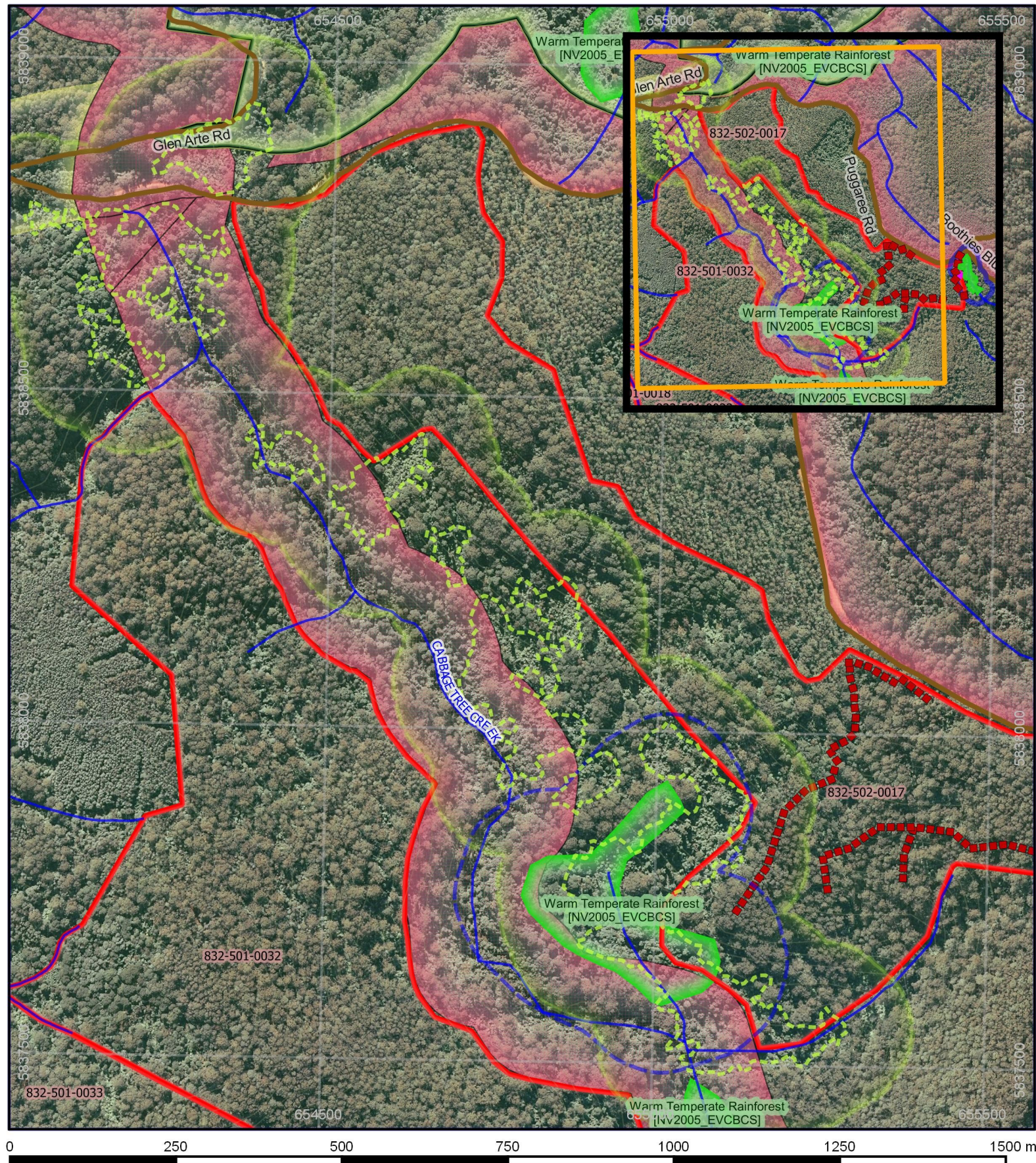
Thankyou, we look forward to your prompt responsive action to this matter.

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Legend

<p>Rainforest EVC's in: [NV2005_EVCBCS]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rainforests 100m Extending from Modelled NV2005_EVCBCS Rainforest Minimum area to assess for rainforest presence Potential 100m buffer on rainforest extent coinciding with Linear Reserve 	<p>Forest Management Zones [DEPI; June: 2014; FMZ100]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special Protection Zone Conservation Parks and Reserves Special Management Zone General Management Zone Logging disturbance (part) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scheduled Logging Coupes (VicForests, TRP) [Approved_TRP_August_2015] Parks & Reserves [PARKRES] Roads Watercourses Contours
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Projection: EPSG: 28355
GDA94/MGA Zone 55

Map Scale:
1:7,500



18 March 2016