

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

URGENT: Rainforest Coinciding with Linear Reserve – Coupe 864-505-0011 in Serpentine Creek Rainforest Site of Significance [EG87]

This email details an ongoing breach of the regulatory framework governing logging operations with respect to the lack of appropriate buffers afforded to rainforest stands coinciding with a linear reserve in VicForests logging coupe 864-505-0011.

This logging coupe and Linear Reserve is located within the "Serpentine Creek Rainforest Site of Significance [RSOS EG87]" in East Gippsland.

Logging operations have commenced and are ongoing within this coupe.

On ground analysis of the minimum extent of rainforest present at the location described above and further detailed in the attached map shows rainforest is present within and adjacent to the coupe and that this rainforest coincides with a Linear Reserve Special Protection Zone (DETAILNO: P-864-01-03) and that the rainforest stand extends beyond this Linear Reserve.

The minimum extent of rainforest identified within and adjacent to the coupe has not been provided a 100m buffer and this buffer has not been included in the Special Protection Zone (SPZ).

Section 4.6.4.1 of the Planning Standards for Timber Harvesting in Victoria's State Forests (2014) requires a 100m 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 been planned to and will shortly occur (if not already) within 100m of the full extent of the rainforest stand.

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

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

VicForests must be immediately restrained by the Department from logging in this coupe until the full extent of rainforest is delineated, a 100m buffer is placed on the rainforest stand that coincides with the Linear Reserve and both the rainforest stand and its 100m buffer are included in the SPZ. Until these actions have been completed logging within coupe 864-505-0011 will be (and has been) illegal.

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 864-505-0011, 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 864-505-0011 has been or will be illegal and the Department must restrain VicForests to prevent any further unlawful activity within coupe 864-505-0011.

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.

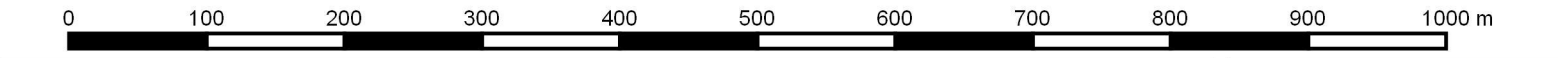
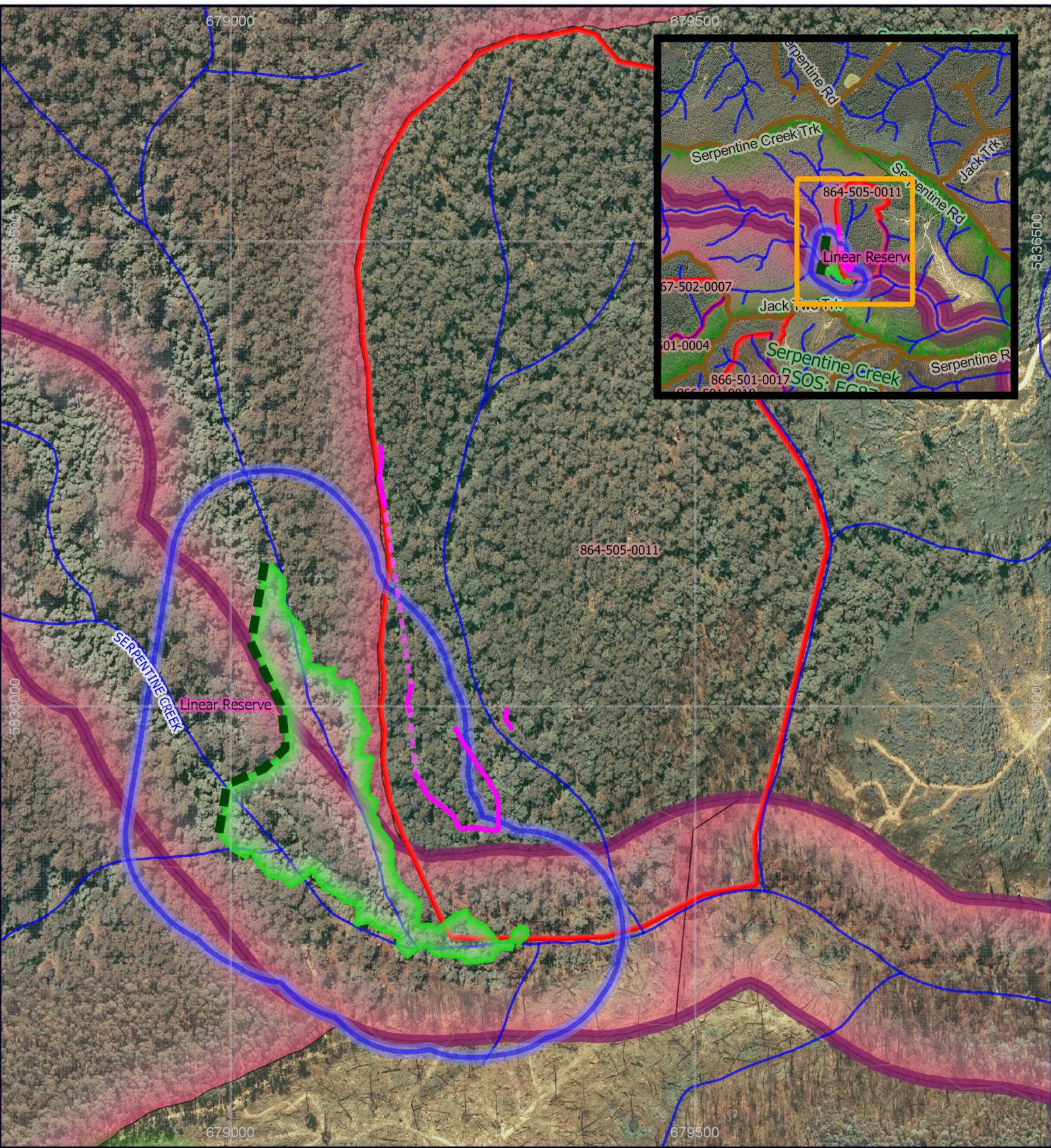
Thankyou, we look forward to your prompt responsive action to this matter.

Andrew Lincoln
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Legend			
	Minimum assessed rainforest extent (eastern & southern edges)		Scheduled Logging Coupes (VicForests, TRP) [Approved_TRP_August_2015]
	Rainforest extent continues west		Roads
	Minimum 100m Buffer on Minimum assessed Rainforest extent		Watercourses
	Linear Reserve		Coupe demarcation tapes
	Rainforest Site of Significance		Approx. expected continuation of coupe demarcation tapes
		Forest Management Zones [DEPI; June: 2014; FMZ100]	
			Special Protection Zone
			Special Management Zone
			General Management Zone

Projection: EPSG: 28355
GDA94/MGA Zone 55

Map Scale:
1:5,500

04 April 2016