



Bird Observation & Conservation Australia

Incorporating Bird Observers Club of Australia

Helping today's birds survive tomorrow

Forests Assessment
Natural Resources Commission
forests@nrc.nsw.gov.au

27 August 2009

Dear Commissioners

Terms of Reference Assessment of Riverina Red Gum Forests

Bird Observation & Conservation Australia (BOCA) is a national non-government organisation with more than 3,000 members throughout Australia. BOCA's objectives may be summarised as appreciation, education and conservation relating to Australian birds and their habitat.

The Riverina Red Gum Forests of NSW have been degraded by over 100 years of logging and are severely stressed due to the impacts of the ongoing drought and over-extraction of water in the Murray Darling Basin. These river red gum forests provide crucial habitat for threatened species of birds such as Superb Parrot, Regent Parrot, Bush Stone-curlew and Brown Treecreeper and BOCA believes it is imperative that the Assessment of Riverina Red Gum Forests (the Assessment) leads to greater protection of these forests.

The recent Environmental Impact Statement on the harvesting and associated road work operations in south-western NSW (Forests NSW 2009) highlighted how little is known about populations of both threatened and common species in these forests. Few long-term environmental surveys have been undertaken and available data sets are insufficient to determine whether the current forestry operations are sustainable in the long-term. It is crucial that the precautionary principle is applied to the area and that the Terms of Reference for the Assessment specifically includes identification of new National Parks to protect the conservation values of these forests.

Sincerely,

Richard Hunter
Chief Executive Officer

Reference

Forests NSW, 2009 'Harvesting and associated road work operations in south-western NSW. Environmental impact statement.' May 2009. Retrieved 25th August 2009.
<http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/forests/info/riverinaea>

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