



Statement by RFPG on Proposed Logging in Snobs Creek Catchment and adjoining areas

The RFPG is appalled at VicForests' decision to proceed with logging several coupes close to Snob's Creek falls if the current Federal Court injunction is lifted. The injunction was put in place to protect a large population of greater gliders - a listed threatened species and an essential part of the area's biodiversity which includes powerful and sooty owls which are also threatened species.

The continuing disregard by VicForests of the ecological calamity caused by over-logging in the Rubicon State Forest on top of impact of the Black Saturday fires is completely contrary to its obligations under the Central Highlands Regional Forest Agreement. We have presented evidence to the current review of the RFA of multiple breaches of the provisions of the Agreement, such as failure to abide by the Code of Practice for Timber Production and failure to adopt sustainable harvest levels.

The Snobs Creek catchment, the adjacent Torbreck Range and the entire Rubicon State Forest were once outstanding natural jewels for all Victorian to enjoy. So far much of the Snobs and Torbreck areas has been spared the vast scale of the logging that has already occurred across the Rubicon and Royston River catchments. But the precious ecological, cultural and scenic values of the remaining largely intact area of magnificent ash forest will be lost for generations to come if the same destruction befalls this area. Scant regard also seems to have been paid to the potential long-term impacts on the viability of the Snobs Creek fish hatchery from increased siltation and higher water temperatures.

These coupes may well have been on the Timber Release Plan for some time, but VicForests would be well aware that their inclusion has been opposed by RFPG since our group was formed in 2015.

At current rates of logging, the timber in the Rubicon State Forest will be cut out in as little as five years with the loss of most of the timber industry jobs that the area now supports. But unless it is stopped now, there will be no chance of developing a viable native forest-based tourism industry remotely capable of making up for these looming job losses.

For further information contact info@rubiconforest.org