



North Coast Environment Council Inc.

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## Environment Department playing word games while koala trees fall

Public claims made by Environment Department bureaucrat Tom Grosskopf show the depths to which the NSW Environment Department (DECCW) has fallen. said Susie Russell, NCEC Vice President.

“In responding to information released by the NCEC that shows DECCW has approved 1,900 ha of core koala habitat for logging in the Coffs Harbour Local Government Area, all they can do is play word games.

“When a landowner applies to DECCW for a Property Vegetation Plan to undertake logging, DECCW provides the landowner with a map of their property. This map is to include areas that should not be logged.

“Where there are threatened species records or where koala habitat has been identified within the meaning of State Environmental Planning Policy No. 44, DECCW is meant to include this on the map provided to the landowner.

“The Code of Practice for Private Native Forestry (PNF) clearly states *“Forest operations are not permitted within any area identified as ‘core koala habitat’ within the meaning of State Environmental Planning Policy No. 44 – Koala Habitat Protection.”*<sup>1</sup>

“The Coffs Harbour Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management was jointly developed by Coffs Harbour Council and the National Parks and Wildlife Service as DECCW was then known. It is published by the NPWS, that is, the NSW Government.”<sup>2</sup>

“It states *“This Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management (CKPoM) was prepared by the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) in close consultation with Coffs Harbour City Council (CHCC) under the statutory provisions of State Environmental Planning Policy 44 - Koala Habitat Protection (SEPP 44).”*<sup>3</sup>

“Landowners rely on DECCW to provide them with accurate, up to date advice about where they can log. The PNF field guide says *“DECCW will advise you if there are any known listed species records within the property and within 10 kilometres of the property.”*<sup>4</sup>

DECCW have full knowledge that extensive areas of core koala habitat have been identified in Coffs harbour within the meaning of SEPP 44.

“Coffs Harbour LGA requires that no activity should be approved that damages or diminishes core koala habitat, especially favoured feed trees such as Tallowwoods.

“DECCW has deliberately withheld this information from landowners who are now potentially liable for breaching the law and the Code of Practice,” Ms Russell said.

Meanwhile Tallowwood trees are falling and with them Coffs Harbour's koala population.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/pnf/0837copnorth.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.coffsharbour.nsw.gov.au/resources/documents/KPOM\\_a.pdf](http://www.coffsharbour.nsw.gov.au/resources/documents/KPOM_a.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.coffsharbour.nsw.gov.au/resources/documenths/KPOM\\_a.pdf](http://www.coffsharbour.nsw.gov.au/resources/documenths/KPOM_a.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/pnf/09761Chap4PNFFldGdNthnNSW.pdf>