

SOUTH EAST FOREST RESCUE

S T O P P I N ' T H E C H O P P I N '

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23/8/04

Doug Mills
N.P.W.S.
Southern Directorate,
Threatened Species Unit.

RE: BREACHES OF THE IFOA-TSL IN COMPARTMENT 3046, BODALLA SF No

Dear Doug,

Compartment 3046 is due to be logged by SFNSW in November of this year. SFNSW are currently conducting the pre-logging surveys for this compartment. We were able to accompany them on one of their nocturnal call playback and spotlight surveys on the 22/7/04, and we observed the following breach and inadequacies during this survey.

BREACH 1

8.8.5 Nocturnal Call Playback

Nocturnal call playback must target the following species: Masked Owl, Sooty Owl, Barking Owl, Powerful Owl, Squirrel Glider and Yellow-bellied Glider. Nocturnal call playback surveys must be conducted as follows:

c) At each call playback site, an initial listening period of 10 minutes should be undertaken, then each target species call must be played for five minutes followed by at least a two minute listening period. After the last call at least 10 minutes must be spent listening. Calls must be played from a good quality portable tape cassette or CD player and amplified through a nine volt megaphone, or equivalent or better.

We met the SFO's at 6.30pm on the Tilba-Punkally Rd and after introductions drove a few hundred metres to the call playback site. The time was 6.45 when the equipment was set up and we were given instructions on what to do.

There was to be calls from the following species: Koala, Masked Owl, Sooty Owl, Barking Owl, Powerful Owl and Yellow-bellied Glider. The time required for this at 7 minutes per species (5min playback and 2min listen) is 42 minutes. On top of this is the initial 10 min listen period and final 10 min listen period. This makes the total time for the playback survey to be 62 minutes.

It was 7.30pm when we got back into the cars to drive to the spotlight survey area. The total time for the call playback was 45 minutes, which is in breach of the above condition. We feel that the other call playback surveys could also be in breach and request a full investigation by NPWS of these surveys.

Also of concern is the position and timing of the call playback. The Tilba-Punkally Rd is a back road to Narooma and also the access to many properties. A motorbike drove along the road about 10 minutes before the start of the survey and a car came past during the second call. To do this survey at this time at that

position with this level of disturbance seems that the survey was set up to fail from the start. This also needs investigation as we feel it is not in the spirit of the IFOA.

The sound from the amplification gear was shocking. It was distorted and several of the calls we felt were not representative of the species in question, whether that was from the bad sound quality or bad taping of the call we don't know.

g) Survey season: Anytime of the year, preferably in Spring, Summer and Autumn.

While this condition says "preferably", the SFO's told us that they had to wait until spring to undertake some frog and bat surveys. If this is the case then why shouldn't they also wait until spring to do the call playback as well. This is another factor to make the survey fail.

We would request that you urgently investigate this breach and address our other concerns as soon as possible as the commencement of logging is getting closer. If this breach is found proven and if it is also a regular occurrence it undermines the limited scope for protection of our threatened species by the IFOA. If you have any questions please contact me. Thank you for your time investigating this breach.

Regards,

Scott Daines