



The Hon Mark Furner MP
Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries
and Minister for Rural Communities

Our ref: CTS 18129/22
Your ref: A960977

31/10/2022

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Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Queensland Parliamentary Services
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

Thank you for your letter of 19 October 2022 regarding petition number 3783-22 received by the Queensland Legislative Assembly about proposed selective timber harvesting in Beerwah State Forest Lot 1 AP 22457 tabled in the House on 12 October 2022.

Engagement in relation to the proposed selective native timber harvesting is ongoing, and no decisions have yet been finalised.

Beerwah State Forest was originally established in 1874 as a Reserve for State forest purposes, including selective native timber harvesting. The proposed harvest area near Ewen Maddock Dam was last selectively harvested in the mid-1990s.

Consistent with the requirements of the *Forestry Act 1959*, a wide range of forest values are taken into consideration in the overall management of all State forests by the Department of Environment and Science (through the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and Partnerships (QPWS&P)). These include timber production, recreation, ecological, cultural and other community interests.

I am aware that the conservation status of the koala under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* (Qld) (NC Act) and the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) (EPBC Act) has recently changed to 'endangered' in Queensland. Consequently, the proposed harvest site has been assessed for koalas and koala habitat to ensure compliance with the requirements of the NC Act and the EPBC Act, and a range of measures are planned to be used to protect koalas should harvesting proceed.

Under the selective harvest method, the forest is not cleared. Suitable individual trees are selected from across the site for harvest, leaving a residual forest cover that includes some large trees retained for habitat purposes and other areas that remain unharvested. Selective harvesting encourages natural regeneration, and Beerwah State Forest's current forest structure is a result of selective harvest and regeneration events over many years.

The Queensland Government's Native Timber Action Plan supports actions to deliver a sustainable native timber industry in Queensland, balancing both jobs and the environment.

Consistent with the Plan, the Queensland Government has committed to ending the harvesting of State-owned native forests in the South East Queensland Regional Plan area, including this site, by the end of 2024.

If the petitioners require further information regarding the harvesting proposal, I encourage them to access an online information hub at <https://daf.engagementhub.com.au/seq-forestry-harvest> or contact the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries on 13 25 23 or by email at SEQForestryHarvesting@daf.qld.gov.au.

I hope this information is of assistance to the petitioners.

If you require further information, please contact my office on 07 3719 7420.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Furner'.

MARK FURNER MP

**Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and
Minister for Rural Communities**