

John R. Wilson
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1st July, 2009

The Mayor and Councillors
Kentish Council
PO Box 63
Sheffield
Tasmania 7306

Dear Mayor Don Thwaites and Councillors,

Re: LOGGING COUPE M1 14A CRADLE MOUNTAIN ROAD, MOINA

I wish to draw your attention to a proposed logging operation that will be undertaken by Forestry Tasmania or their contractors on a 24 ha area of State Forest, coupe reference MI 14A at Moina, grid reference is E423197 N5405423 on the Cethana 4240 1:25,000 Tasmmap. Logging operations are expected to commence within the next 12 months.

As this logging is to take place within the Kentish Council Municipality (see map attached) and as I am a ratepayer of Kentish, I am writing to you to express my concern about the deleterious impact that this 'selective logging' will have on the Cradle Mountain Tourist Road along what is locally known as the 'Black Jack Straight', just south of Moina.

In particular, I am concerned that any logging of these beautiful native forests adjacent the road will have a negative impact on what is, at present, one of the most attractive scenic amenities that forms part of the Cradle Mountain experience that our municipality has to offer to visitors. The tall eucalypt forests with its rainforest understory and giant manfrens that border the Cradle Mountain road are no longer commonplace in Tasmania. Consequently, many interstate and overseas tourists see them as a special attraction.

In the preparation of the Forest Practices Plan for this coupe, there will need to be special consideration given by Forestry Tasmania to the protection of all the natural vegetation on the western side of the road, within the boundaries of this logging coupe. Additional access tracks made by logging machinery and log-trucks leading off the busy Cradle Mountain highway, and logging too close to the road corridor will pose safety hazards, and degrade this very sensitive visual landscape. Logging away from the Cradle Mountain Tourist Road at this altitude is also likely to lead to episodic wind shear events, that cause trees to fall into residual forests that may be set aside from logging, if insufficient depth of roadside buffer is retained.

Given the value of this visual amenity to the Kentish Municipality and the importance of Cradle Mountain tourism to the region, I believe it would be in the interests of the Kentish Council and local tourism businesses (especially the Cradle Mountain Village Stakeholders) to make a formal request to Forestry Tasmania's Mersey District Office and/or the Forest Practices Authority.

I recommend the following considerations be included and adhered to in the Forest Practices Plan for this particular coupe:

* no additional access roads off the Cradle Mountain Tourist Road because of the extreme hazard to the travelling public;

* any existing access tracks to be permanently gated to prevent public access into the coupe either during or after logging operations;

* an unlogged buffer zone of at least 100m along the Cradle Mountain Tourist Road to be set aside to maintain the integrity of the present landscape and its visual amenity for tourists and others travelling on this road; and

* the unlogged roadside buffer zone to be of sufficient depth/width (minimum 100m) to prevent storm damage through tree fall towards the highway.

I would be most grateful if the Kentish Council would give consideration of the above concerns, and make appropriate representations.

Yours sincerely,

John R. Wilson
Owner/Manager
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