

An open letter to Victorian Premier Jacinta Allan

Congratulations on your recent appointment to Premier.

We celebrated the Victorian Government's 2021 public commitment to create new protected areas. We applauded the decision to end native forest logging in the east of Victoria by 1 January 2024. In doing so your government acknowledged the incredible natural diversity and cultural importance of these areas.

Yet VicForests has plans to log over 60,000 hectares in the fragmented and cleared landscape of the west. If your agencies continue to log this habitat, plants and animals like the Powerful Owl, Brush-tailed Phascogale and Mt Cole Grevillea risk becoming locally extinct.

It's now time to demonstrate leadership by permanently protecting the surviving wildlife, forests and woodlands of western Victoria. It's time to look after the complex web of natural life in these forests and restore what we have left.

We call on you to immediately:

- Halt the taxpayer-funded destruction of our natural heritage and end native forest logging statewide.
- Legislate the promised Wombat-Lerderderg, Mount Buangor and Pyrenees national parks.
- Cease all firewood harvesting in Wellsford Forest and include it in the Greater Bendigo National Park.
- Enact formal protections promised for the nature-rich Cobaw Conservation Park, and other regional parks and conservation reserves.

This is a rare opportunity to create a profound legacy for future generations and:

- Provide vital habitat for over 370 rare and threatened animals and plants.
- Support First Nations joint management of new parks.
- Help reduce the impacts of climate disruption by trapping millions of tonnes of stored carbon.
- Support rural and regional livelihoods through visitation and nature-based tourism.
- Protect river headwaters that flow from these forests to create water security for farms and communities.
- Help forestry workers to transfer their skills to nature-positive jobs.

Creating new national parks and phasing out destructive native forest logging isn't only about protecting wildlife and beautiful places. It's about clean air and water, a liveable climate and people's livelihoods.

We, the undersigned, representing hundreds of thousands of Victorians, call on you to formally protect these natural areas and act immediately to halt logging our native forests and woodlands.

ACF Community Bendigo District
Australian Conservation Foundation
Australian Plants Society
Bacchus Marsh Platypus Alliance
Ballarat Wildlife Rehabilitation and Conservation
BEAM Mitchell Environment Group
Bendigo and District Environment Council
Bendigo Climate Alliance
Bendigo Family Nature Club
Bendigo Field Naturalists Club
Bendigo Sustainability Group
Biolinks Alliance Inc
BirdLife Castlemaine District Branch
Castlemaine Field Naturalists Club Inc
Clarkefield and District Farm/Landcare
Professor David Lindenmayer
Doctors for the Environment Australia
Entomological Society
Environment Victoria
Environmental Justice Australia
Field Naturalists Club of Ballarat
Field Naturalists Club of Victoria
Friends of Kooyoora
Friends of Native Forests Enfield
Friends of Nyah Vinifera Forest
Friends of Steele Creek
Friends of the Box-Iron Bark Forests
Friends of the Brisbane Ranges
Friends of the Earth
Friends of the Whipstick
Friends of Werribee Gorge and Long Forest Mallee
Greening of Riddell
Hepburn Wind
Lighter Footprints
Macedon and Mount Macedon Landcare Group
Macedon Ranges Field Naturalists Club
Macedon Ranges Sustainability Group
Malmsbury District Landcare

Melbourne Bushwalkers Club
Monique Ryan MP
Moonee Valley Sustainability
Moorabool Environment Group
Mount Cole & Pyrenees Nature Group
Nature Network
Newham and District Landcare Group
Newlands Friends of the Forest
Rob Gell AM, President, The Royal Society of Victoria
Riddells Creek Landcare
Save our Strathbogie Forest
Southern Otway Landcare Network
The National Trust Australia (Victoria)
Trentham Sustainability Group
Victorian Forest Alliance
Victorian Mountain Tramping Club
Victorian National Parks Association
The Waterways Network
Wellsford Forest Friends and Landcare Group
Werribee River Association
Western Highway Conservation Group
White gums Australia
The Wilderness Society (Victoria)
Wildlife Carers for Protection of Habitat
Wombat Forestcare
WWF Australia