



**Sue Higginson**

**NSW GREENS MP**

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**29 August 2023**

**The Hon Penny Sharpe**

Minister for the Environment

By email: [office@sharpe.minister.nsw.gov.au](mailto:office@sharpe.minister.nsw.gov.au)

**Cc. Tony Chappel**

CEO of the Environment Protection Authority

By email: [tony.chappel@epa.nsw.gov.au](mailto:tony.chappel@epa.nsw.gov.au)

Dear Penny

**Logging operations of Greater Glider habitat in Tallaganda State Forest**

I'm writing to you today to request that you immediately issue a stop work order, or use any other discretionary powers you have that would have the same effect, to stop the work for seven active logging compartments in Tallaganda State Forest. Tallaganda is one of only two large-scale unburnt refuge areas for endangered Greater Gliders following the 2019/20 Black Summer bushfires.

Greater Gliders were severely impacted by the Black Summer fires and means that the population in Tallaganda is relatively isolated, the size of this refuge is viable though and is of significant conservation value due to the fractured forests and populations in the surrounding area. As the surrounding forests slowly recover, the population in Tallaganda is a vital 'source population' to reintroduce Greater Gliders into the region.

Greater Gliders have been listed as endangered nationally since July 2022 and in NSW since November 2022. They have been in decline for many years as their habitat has been fragmented and or destroyed and the Tallaganda refuge is critically important to ensure their survival in Southern NSW and eastern Victoria. This is even more vital as we move into a new dry weather cycle, if either of the remaining refuge areas were to experience a fire then there will only be one large population of Greater Glider remaining.

This requires urgent intervention as Forestry Corporation has only identified a single Greater Glider den tree across the almost 5,000 hectares of active compartments. The World Wildlife Fund and Wilderness Australia have recorded dozens of den trees and Greater Gliders in this area, indicating that Forestry Corporation have failed to conduct proper surveys.

As you would be aware, Forestry Corporation are obligated under CIFOA Protocol 20 to conduct pre-operational fauna and flora surveys. The massive discrepancy between the reported Greater Glider habitat and sightings and the report from Forestry Corporation warrants further independent assessment before logging of this critical area is allowed to proceed.

I urge you to order an immediate halt to operations while the surveys for Greater Gliders and habitat trees are independently verified by external ecologists. Your commitment to zero extinctions has been very clear but if logging in Tallaganda continues, the Greater Glider will be pushed further along the road to that destination.

I would be grateful if you could take action to address this matter with urgency and provide a response by return email [sue.higginson@parliament.nsw.gov.au](mailto:sue.higginson@parliament.nsw.gov.au). Please also do not hesitate to contact me directly on 0428 227 363 to discuss the matter further. I look forward to your timely response on this important issue.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Sue Higginson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Sue Higginson

**Member of the Legislative Council & Solicitor**