

East Gippsland Action Update 2005

Water Catchment Community Action

Thirty five residents of a rural community in East Gippsland had a BBQ in a working logging coupe. The group, ranging in ages from one year to fifty-one years, is opposed to the logging of their water catchment. They spent the afternoon examining the logging coupe, which is in the headwaters of their domestic water supply. The area contains old growth forest. There are a further 20 coupes scheduled in the water catchment.

The locals have been circulating a petition calling for an end to logging in their domestic water catchment. Approximately 80% of the community has signed the petition so far.



Dingo Creek Rainforest Logging

Logging started in a controversial area of rainforest at Dingo Creek just weeks before a Supreme Court decision on whether the logging was legal was handed down. Logging ceased just days before the decision, but not before 30 hectares was cleared. Activists defied an “exclusion zone” placed on the area to look for breaches of the Code of Forest Practices.

For more information on East Gippsland’s Forests:
www.geco.org.au



- Ellery Forest Blockade
- Eden Chipmill
- Vicforest Office Occupation
- Water Catchment Community Action
- Dingo Creek rainforest logging

Ellery Forest Blockade

11 January 2005: A large group of conservationists have entered a logging coupe in the Ellery state forest 40 km north east of Orbost. The group includes people from Canada, Korea, Ireland, Holland and Japan who have spent the weekend at an educational forest camp hosted by a local environment centre...

13 January 2005:

“Seven conservationists were arrested yesterday in the contentious Ellery forest block, 40 kms north east of Orbost. The tree platform has been removed with one woman arrested.



Another thirty nine year old mother was also removed and arrested from the wooden structure eight metres above an access road. Two women were arrested for obstructing machinery while a further three people were also charged for trespassing in State Forest. Police search and rescue dismantled and removed the thirty metre high tree platform, connected to logging machinery. Police search and rescue failed to remove a young woman from the tree. She remained at the top for a further six hours before climbing down....”

19 January 2005: “Two people perched 35 metres high in tree platforms, attached to logging machinery, evaded arrest yesterday. Search and Rescue removed the tree platforms and detached the roped connected to the logging machinery, leaving the two conservationists in the canopy of the old growth forest till the late hours of last night. These actions follow an intense week, where nine conservationists have been arrested in efforts to protect the remaining threatened old growth forests...”

Eden Woodchip Mill



February 2005: Sixty Conservationists from East Gippsland and across Australia have prevented access to South East Fibre Export’s Eden Mill in southern NSW. They are calling on Victorian Premier Steve Bracks and NSW Premier Bob Carr to protect remaining old growth forests in the two states. Three conservationists were arrested. They escaped conviction when they appeared in court and the magistrate stated “History would judge whether they were heroes or fools”

June 2005: Ten conservationists sneak into the heavily fortified chipmill at Eden and five attach themselves to the conveyor belt. The chipmill was shut down for 9 hours and cost the 100% Japanese owned company \$250000. Five protesters received \$150 fines when they appeared in court for “entering enclosed lands”.

Vic Forests Office Occupation

About thirty conservationists from Victoria and New South Wales occupied the new Vic Forest office in Bairnsdale. Banners reading "Victoria Must Act To End Old Growth Logging" were hung from the roof. Twenty five police attended the scene and there were three arrests.