



Conservation Regulator

Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action

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Ms Melissa Morey
President and Secretary
Ballarat wildlife Rehabilitation and Conservation Inc

via email: president@bwrac.org.au

Dear Melissa,

Thank you for your email on 30 November 2023 about a population of koalas near the Gordon township. The Conservation Regulator understands there is community interest in the welfare of koalas at the site.

There is a robust regulatory framework in place to minimise impacts on koalas in blue gum plantations in Victoria. Blue gum harvesting operators are required to hold an authorisation from the Conservation Regulator, with strict conditions including requirements for koala spotters, and to retain eight trees surrounding any koala on site. This approach is outlined in the Conservation Regulator's guide [Minimising impacts on Koalas in blue gum plantations: regulatory guide and is standard, mandatory](#) practice across the blue-gum industry in Victoria. The plantation operator at the Gordon site holds a *Wildlife Act 1975* authorisation to conduct harvesting works in the plantation consistent with this regulatory guide.

Translocation of wildlife can cause significant stress, injury and potential death to wildlife. That is a key reason the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action generally does not support translocation of non-threatened species. It was also a key factor in the Conservation Regulator determined not to issue a permit to translocate koalas at the Gordon site. The alternative, leaving the koalas in place during and after plantation harvest, allows them to stay or move naturally to their preferred location. This approach has been effectively applied in the industry over a number of years.

Conservation Regulator Authorised Officers will monitor harvest operations at the Gordon site in line with operational priorities to ensure works are being conducted legally and responsibly.

Questions about harvesting and koala surveys at this site should be directed to the plantation operator.

Thank you again for writing to me, and I trust this information will be of assistance.

Yours sincerely,

David McIlroy
Director – Regulatory Operations
4/12/2023

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