



**TIMBER NSW**

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*An economically, socially and environmentally sustainable timber industry.*

# Media Release

## **Ground Breaking Koala Research in the North East of NSW**

The NSW Environmental Protection Authority and NSW Department of Industry - Lands jointly funded research undertaken by forest ecologist Dr Brad Law, released today assesses new techniques to track and map koalas and their distribution.

The research findings auger well for improving the capacity to protect koalas and sheds light on their resilience despite incursions from urban encroachment, wildfire, dog attacks and motor vehicle strikes.

Maree McCaskill, General Manager of Timber NSW, said the research indicates that despite previous pessimistic reports, there are many more koalas than previously thought, particularly in state forests. The new technique of acoustic monitoring (SongMeters - tracking koala calls) offers far more reliable proof of that fact, than all previous survey methods, particularly searching for koala scats.

“The model developed by Dr Law has revealed that the presence of koalas is heavily influenced by wild fire history. Wildfire is a significant threat and we have been warning about the concerning increase in the number and intensity of fires for years” she said.

“Forestry will continue to play a key role in managing the threat of fires and its devastating outcomes on koalas and other animals. The low level burning previously used in traditional aboriginal culture kept the forest areas healthy and fauna protected from massive destructive fires. The lack of controlled burning threatens the ecology, the health of the forests as well as life and property”.

“Koalas and their preservation are a top priority for the industry which carries a particular Koala Code of Practice for forest operations in NSW”.

Dr Law’s report indicates that the very large number of koalas recorded in some state forests is cause for optimism for koala conservation.

“Significantly those state forests are regrowth forests with a long history of moderate intensity timber harvesting” Ms McCaskill said.

**Ends**

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