

# WEPA BULLETIN

Willoughby Environmental Protection Association



31 MAY 2017

## No 'Cash for trees' - your urgent action required!



*(Angophora costata)* in Albert Ave, Chatswood. Photo: Meredith Foley

## STOP 'CASH FOR TREES'

The Berejiklian Government is proposing to allow vital wildlife habitat in city and country NSW to be bulldozed in exchange for cash payments from developers. It's like 10/50 but worse! The threats to trees and bushland are extreme - developers are cashed up and ready to clear.

[The final details of the NSW Government's tree clearing legislation are now on public exhibition](#) and we've got until **21 June** to take a stand and show that what is being proposed is not acceptable to us.

This is the first major environmental decision Premier Berejiklian, Planning Minister Roberts and Environment Minister Upton will be making.

Please join us in calling them to make sure that developers are not allowed to get away with paying cash in exchange for clearing our precious bushland.

## WHAT ACTION CAN YOU TAKE?

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### RALLY

Join the rally to protect our green spaces and say No to Cash 4 Trees at a rally in front of Vaucluse MP and NSW Minister for the Environment Gabrielle Upton.

**When:** Thursday 15 June 8.30-9.30 am

**Where:** Outside Gabrielle Upton's office  
330 New South Head Rd, Double Bay  
For more information see the [web page](#).

### RING

You can call the:

NSW Premier's office on [\(02\) 8574 5000](#)

Environment Minister Gabrielle Upton on [\(02\) 8574 6107](#) and

Planning Minister Anthony Robert on [\(02\) 8574 5600](#).

### EMAIL

You can also email them here: [Premier](#), [Upton](#) and [Roberts](#).

You can access tips about what to say when you call or email by [clicking here](#).

Other key points you could make:

> The draft regulations, codes and Vegetation State Environment Planning Policy spell DISASTER for our wildlife and our communities.

- > The Vegetation SEPP MUST be released for public comment.
  
- > Tree protection MUST NOT be relegated to Council DCPs. Protection of native and non-native trees must be left in the Court-enforceable LEPs.
  
- > Developers will be able to clear important habitat in city and country though making cash payments BUT money cannot compensate for the destruction of nature. Cash for clearing IS NOT an acceptable alternative.
  
- > Any vegetation offsets MUST be of the same ecological community and habitat value as the vegetation being cleared. These offsets must also be located near the area where vegetation has been cleared, not hundreds of kilometres away.
  
- > Protection of local biological diversity MUST be included in the Regulations. Cumulative effects MUST be included in the Regulations.
  
- > Protection of local wildlife MUST be included in the operation of the Vegetation SEPP & wildlife MUST be protected during any clearing.

*Remember - you don't need to be an expert, you just need to show you care about this issue and are outraged by what is being proposed. Calling the Premier or a Minister can seem daunting but it's important to remember that our elected representatives are there to act on our behalf. Calling a Minister is being proactive about exercising your democratic rights!*

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## WRITE

### 1) If you are in the Premier's electorate:

The Hon. Gladys Berejiklian, MP  
Member for Willoughby  
280 Willoughby Rd  
Naremburn NSW 2065

Dear Premier Berejiklian,

I am writing to you as your local constituent to express my grave concerns about the draft tree clearing regulations and codes you recently released under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* and *Local Land Services Amendment Act 2016*.

These regulations and codes will enable extensive self-assessment of tree clearing by landowners across our State and reduce protection for nature and farmland. They will also introduce a 'flexible' Biodiversity Offsets Scheme, which will allow developers in Sydney and elsewhere to make cash payments in exchange for clearing native vegetation.

These new arrangements are completely unacceptable to me and I ask you to ensure that, at a minimum, they are tightened with the following provisions:

- > Excluding the option of cash payments in lieu of genuine vegetation offsets to compensate for the destruction of native vegetation
- > Ensuring that any vegetation offsets are like-for-like and located in the same bio-region as the native vegetation being removed
- > Ensuring that endangered ecological communities and crown lands (including Travelling Stock Routes) are excluded from clearing under the codes
- > Ensuring that core koala habitat is comprehensively assessed and identified across NSW under SEPP 44 before the new laws are activated, and excluded from code-based clearing; and
- > Ensuring that the impacts of clearing on soils, water, salinity and carbon are assessed to ensure protection of farmland and biodiversity.

In addition to the above, I also urge you to ensure that the proposed Native Vegetation Regulatory Mapping is finalised and operational before the draft regulations are finalised and operationalised. Using transitional provisions before the maps are ready, as proposed, is likely to lead to confusion and unlawful clearing.

Whether in the city or country, native vegetation is absolutely essential to the wellbeing of our communities and our economy. As my elected representative, I expect you to act responsibly and stand up for what is in the public interest – not simply the interests of individual developers and agribusiness.

I look forward to your addressing my concerns.

Sincerely,

Signed:

Name and address:

## **2. If you reside in another electorate**

The Hon. Gladys Berejiklian, MP  
Premier of NSW  
PO Box 5341  
Sydney NSW 2001

Dear Premier Berejiklian,

I am writing to you to express my grave concerns about the draft tree clearing regulations and codes you recently released under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* and *Local Land Services Amendment Act 2016*.

These regulations and codes will enable extensive self-assessment of tree clearing by landowners across our State and reduce protection for nature and farmland. They will also introduce a 'flexible' Biodiversity Offsets Scheme, which will allow developers in Sydney and elsewhere to make cash payments in exchange for clearing native vegetation.

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- > Ensuring that core koala habitat is comprehensively assessed and identified across NSW under SEPP 44 before the new laws are activated, and excluded from code-based clearing; and
- > Ensuring that the impacts of clearing on soils, water, salinity and carbon are assessed to ensure protection of farmland and biodiversity.

In addition to the above, I also urge you to ensure that the proposed Native Vegetation Regulatory Mapping is finalised and operational before the draft regulations are finalised and operationalised. Using transitional provisions before the maps are ready, as proposed, is likely to lead to confusion and unlawful clearing.

Whether in the city or country, native vegetation is absolutely essential to the wellbeing of our communities and our economy. I expect you to act responsibly and stand up for what is in the public interest – not simply the interests of individual developers and agribusiness.

I look forward to your addressing my concerns.

Sincerely,

Signed:

Name and address:

### Contact WEPA

**Email:** [wepa@wepa.org.au](mailto:wepa@wepa.org.au)

**Website:** [www.wepa.org.au](http://www.wepa.org.au)

A member of the [Nature Conservation Council of NSW](#).

WEPA acknowledges the traditional owners of this land, the Gumeraygal people, their spirits and ancestors and we pay our respects to Elders past and present.

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#### Disclaimer

The views expressed in the articles above are not necessarily those of the publisher or editor.

Contributions from WEPA members are welcome.

The WEPA logo above was created by Adrienne Kabos.