

## Media Release

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### Firefighting skills to suffer as Supreme Court shuts down coupe

Hundreds of trainees, including from the State Emergency Service, Victoria Police and Forest Fire Management Victoria have been shut out of a timber coupe in East Gippsland in a bid to protect the Yellow-bellied glider. The irony is that Tiger Coupe at Nowa Nowa was not even intended for timber harvesting. VicForests, who manages this coupe, had handed it to TAFE Gippsland to be used for forestry fire training. Programs are run to prepare trainees for bushfires, storms and floods.

“Having a trained firefighting workforce is critical to defending our towns, built infrastructure, farms, livestock, our forests and wildlife against devastating impacts of bushfires,” said Ms Kerr, CEO of VFPA.

“The memory of the devastating Black Summer fires in 2019-20 remains very vivid for many Victorians who are likely to be speechless over the outcome of this court case and the audacity of environmentalists when this coupe was not even being harvested.”

As VicForests now scrambles to provide a suitable alternative coupe, this decision shows the disappointing extent that environmentalists will go to put the environment above all else,” concluded Ms Kerr.

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#### About

The Victorian Forest Products Association (VFPA) represents all elements of the value chain from both sustainable harvesting of plantations and multiple-use natural forest resources. VFPA is a policy development and advocacy group which represents the interests of Victoria’s sustainable forest industries. We collaborate strongly with other industry bodies to ensure the best outcomes for the industry generally and our members more specifically. Our charter provides autonomy to manage State issues. We cooperate with the Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) on any issues that transcend State borders and have National implications.

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