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## **TIMBER SUPPORTERS SLAM GREEN GROUP OVER LEGAL ACTION**

Community representative group Timber Communities Australia has slammed Environment East Gippsland's Supreme Court injunction to halt logging at Brown Mountain as another publicity stunt in a series of actions to interrupt the legal harvesting of timber.

Environment East Gippsland (EEG) signalled its intent to seek legal intervention last Friday following the Environment Minister Gavin Jennings decision to allow logging to continue at Brown Mountain, approximately 90 kilometres north of Orbost. Mr Jennings made his decision based on the lack of meaningful evidence presented by EEG in its attempt to have saw log production banned in the area.

"This is another media stunt by EEG that will need to be funded by my taxpayers and well meaning but misinformed donors to the environment movement" said TCA spokesperson Trevor Brown.

Minister Jennings deserves congratulations for standing by due process and examining all available evidence before deciding that Brown Mountain's status as a prime source of quality hardwood timber was more important than hearsay and some dodgy evidence" Brown said.

"A previous EEG stunt was the production of a supposedly rare freshwater crayfish that turned out to be a common species. Regardless, they deprived timber workers of a couple of weeks work through that action. Now, they claim to have photographed a long-footed potaroo within hours of the Minister's announcement. What is rare is the timing of the alleged sighting given that the Government's scientists have been studying sightings and movements of the species in East Gippsland for more than two decades" he added.

Timber Communities Australia Chief Executive Jim Adams said that the environment groups actions were further proof that it would go to any lengths to deprive local communities and families of their livelihoods. "The real rare and endangered species are the hard working families working legally in the forests."

"Despite the already extensive forest conservation reserves in place in the area, including the 25,600 hectare Errinundra National Park, even when the Government gifts the environmentalists a further 400 hectares, they cry that it is not enough. These people are tolerated by the majority of East Gippslanders but they seem intent on destroying the social and economic structure of their local communities".

"Brown Mountain is a significant source of high quality, high value saw logs. Its status as an approved management area has been determined by thorough and exhaustive scientific research and consultation. Yet, even when given further consideration, the Government has rejected the case of the environmentalists they still won't accept the decision" said Mr Adams.

**ENDS**

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