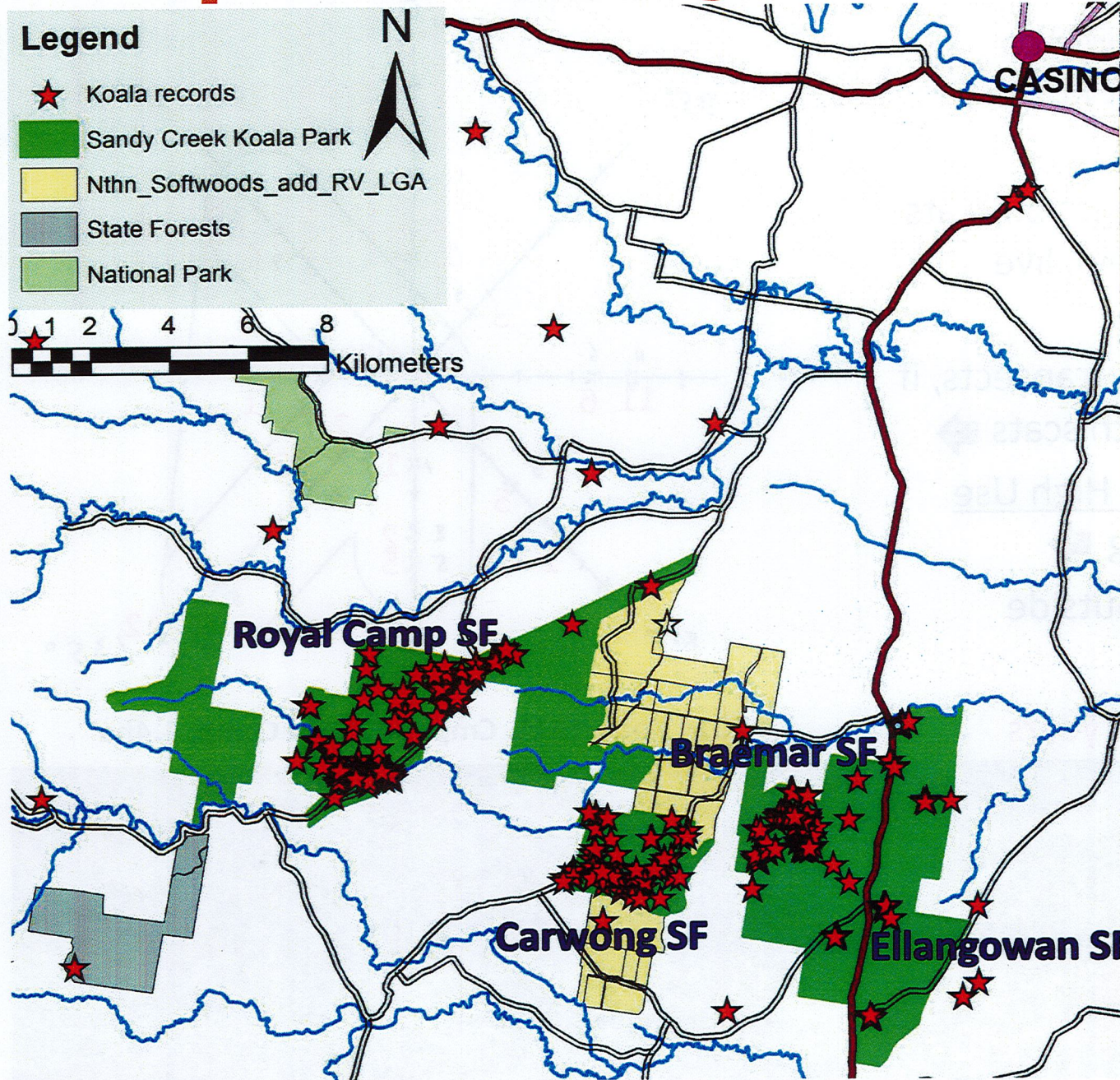


Proposed Sandy Creek Koala Park



Document tendered by

MR DAILAN PUGH

Received by

ANDREW RATCHFORD

Date: 18 / 10 / 19

Resolved to publish Yes / No



Koala High Use Areas

Since 1997 FCNSW required to thoroughly search for Koala scats.

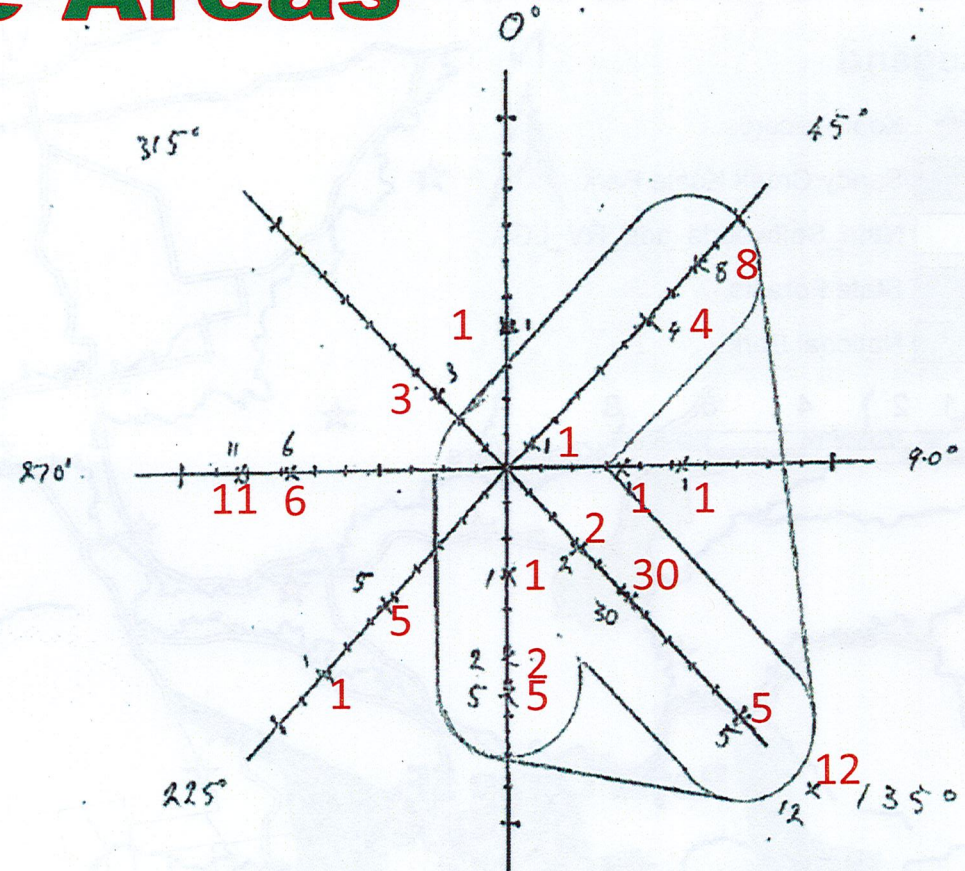
If find Koala high use tree: >20 scats, 2 sizes (mother & joey), live Koala ➡

Do eight radiating 100m transects, if find 3 more trees with scats ➡

Apply 20m buffer, Koala High Use Area, exclude logging ➡

Retain 5 feed trees/ha outside
Can log next time

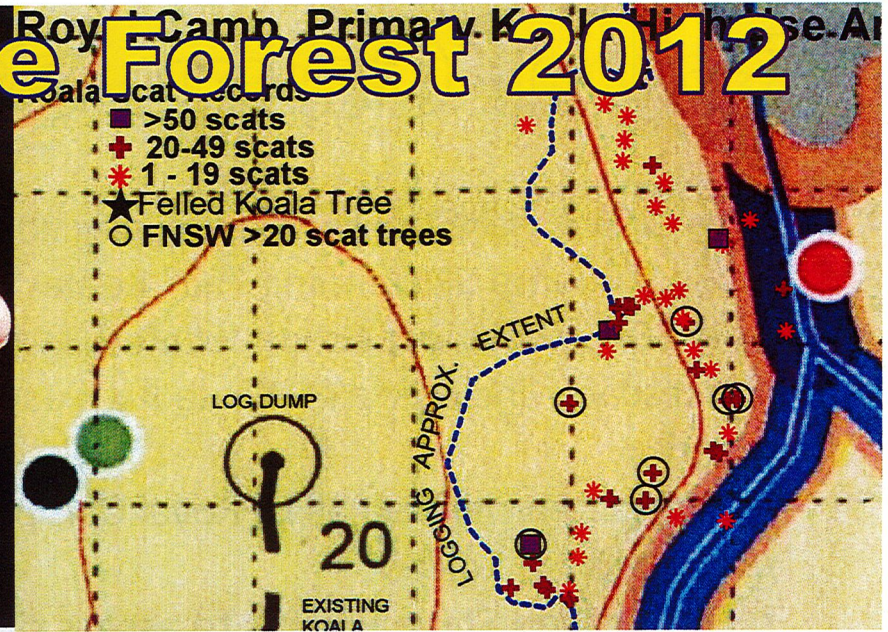
200ha identified over 20 years



2014 Koala HUA. Cmpt 14 Royal Camp, 1.4ha



Royal Camp State Forest 2012



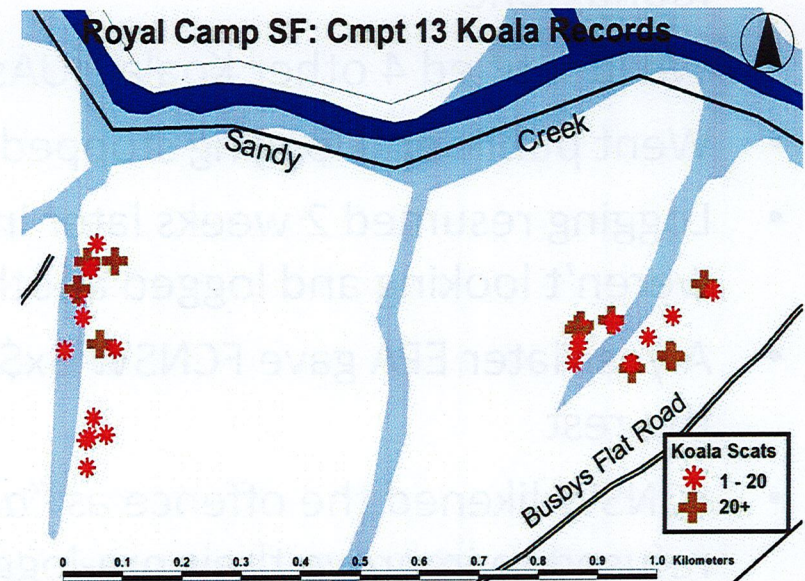
- August 2012, NEFA caught FCNSW logging a Koala HUA in compartment 15 Royal Camp SF, we found 45 trees with Koala scats, 23 with >20 scats, where FCNSW found none
- We identified 4 other Koala HUAs about to be logged
- Went public and logging stopped next day
- Logging resumed 2 weeks later in compartment 16 and NEFA found they still weren't looking and logged another Koala HUA, then later another.
- A year later EPA gave FCNSW 3x\$300 fines for just the first offence, nothing for the rest
- FCNSW likened the offence as "*akin to staying too long in a parking lot*" and refused to improve their pre-logging surveys.

Royal Camp State Forest 2013

- June 2013 FCNSW propose logging compartment 13 Royal Camp SF claiming “nil” Koalas
- July 2013 NEFA inspection located 34 trees with Koala scats, including 11 Koala high use trees, on one day
- NEFA recommended all of Royal Camp be protected for Koalas
- EPA engaged Steve Phillips to assess significance, finding that with the surrounding population in decline Royal Camp “*should be considered important at all levels of assessment*”
- EPA recommend “*no forestry activities occur in Royal Camp State Forest*” until after new Coastal IFOA.
- FCNSW engaged a scat-detection dog, finding a density of one Koala per 2.8 ha
- NEFA propose Royal Camp and Carwong State Forests as Sandy Creek National Park

Ecologist David Milledge concluded:

The level of Koala activity revealed by these searches is amongst the highest I have recorded in my experience of over 20 years ... This highlights the significance of Royal Camp State Forest in supporting a dense local Koala population and possibly one of the most important on public land in the region.



What EPA Found

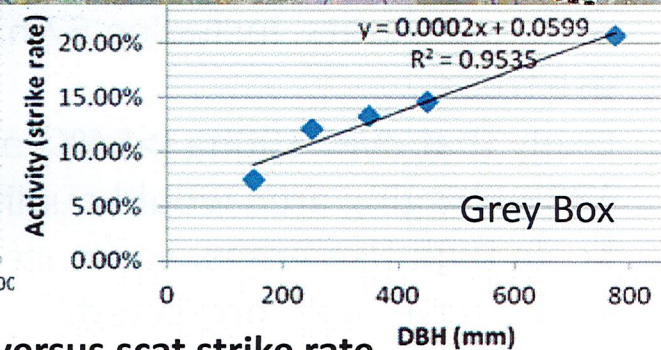
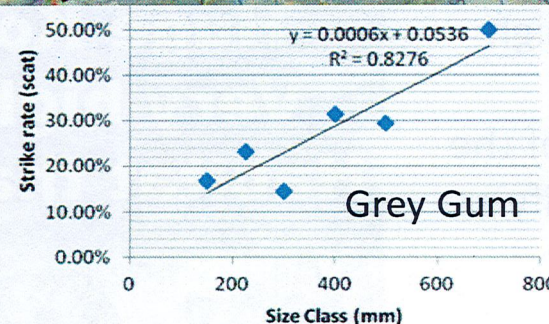
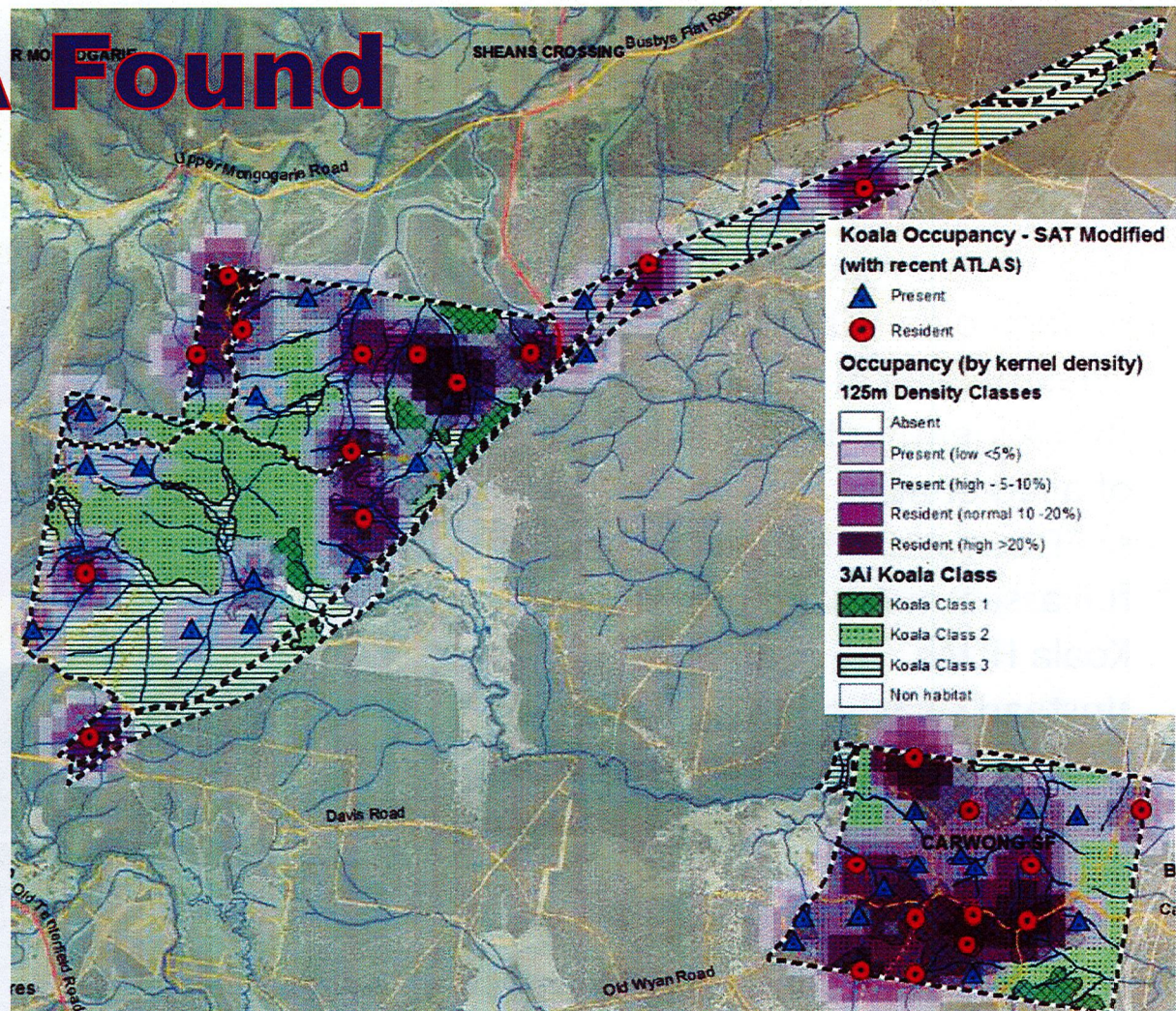
In 2016 EPA undertook an assessment of Royal Camp and Carwong State Forests, along with 2 other forests, finding:

- 80% of Carwong and 58% of Royal Camp State Forest is utilised by Koalas
- Koalas prefer larger feed trees (over 30cm diameter), with usage increasing with tree size
- koala prefer areas of least disturbance
- Koalas prefer areas with >50% mature and over mature trees

Use of a scat detection dog found:

Royal Camp: Koalas occur at relatively high density ... a significant amount of Koala movement and activity

Carwong: Koalas occur at very high density ... a very significant amount of Koala movement and activity



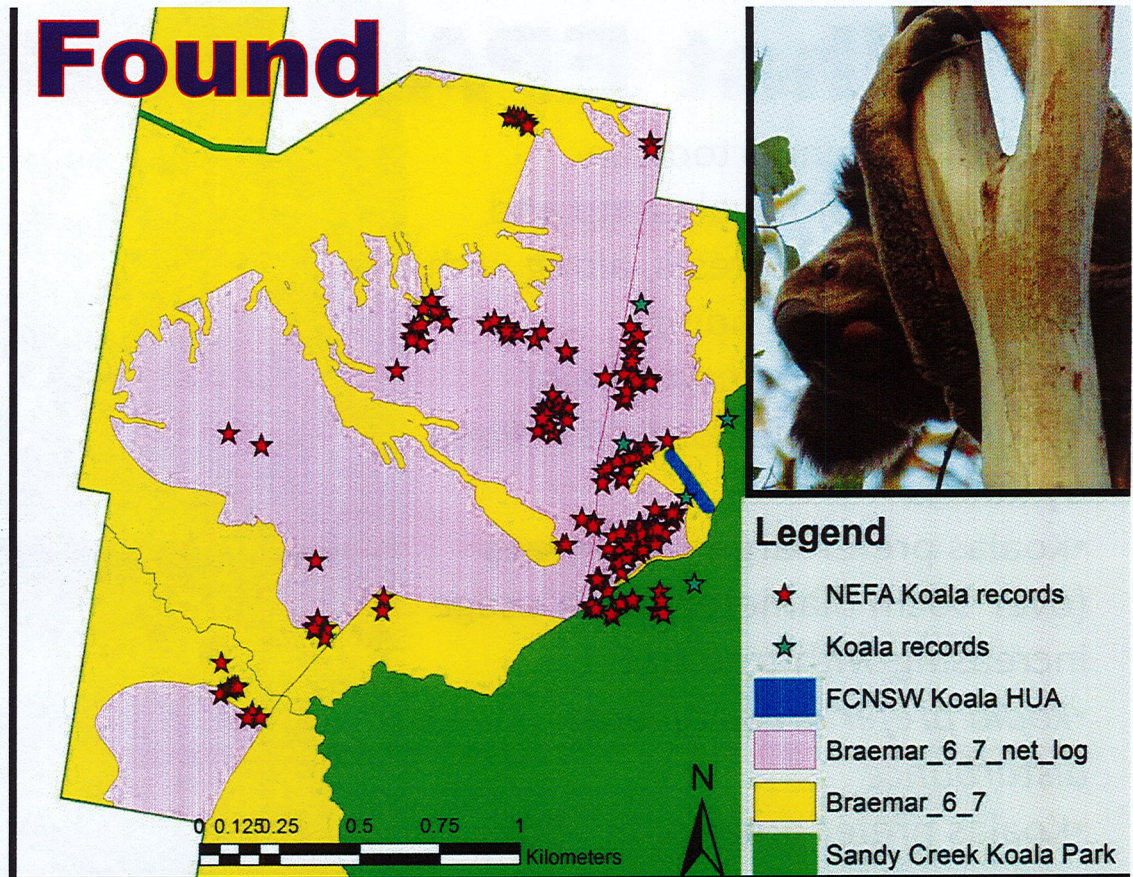
Size class versus scat strike rate

What NEFA Found

- July 2019 NEFA checked part of Braemar SF due for logging in August.
- Marked up ready for logging
- 0.9ha Koala HUA identified, 5 feed trees/ha >30cm required retention
- NEFA identified 3ha Koala HUA, part of a larger area.
- NEFA wrote to Berejiklian asking for full assessment and protection of Koala HUAs
- Instead switched to new rules – no longer need to protect Koala HUAs
- Only retain 5 feed trees/ha >20cm diameter

NEFA has now identified 165 trees with Koala scats, including 67 high use trees.

Likely that over 100ha (>54%) of the 185ha logging area would qualify as Koala High Use Areas, and once would have been protected.

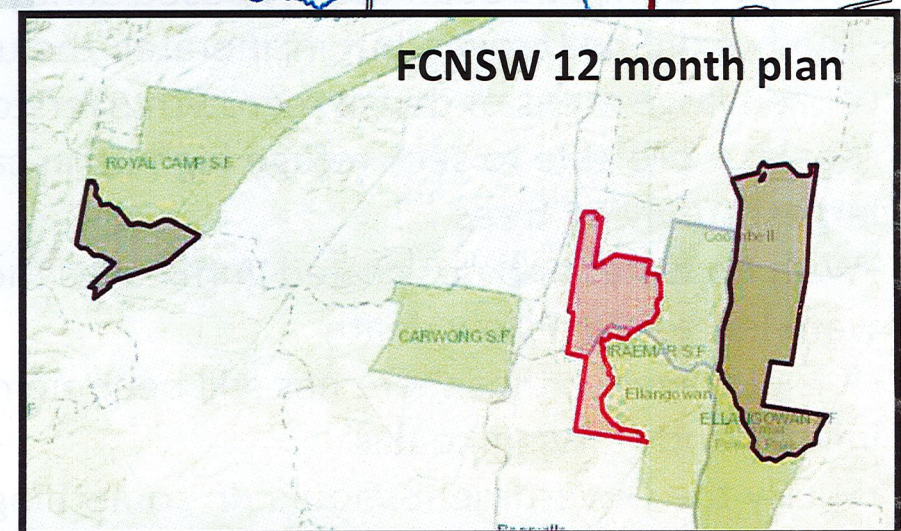
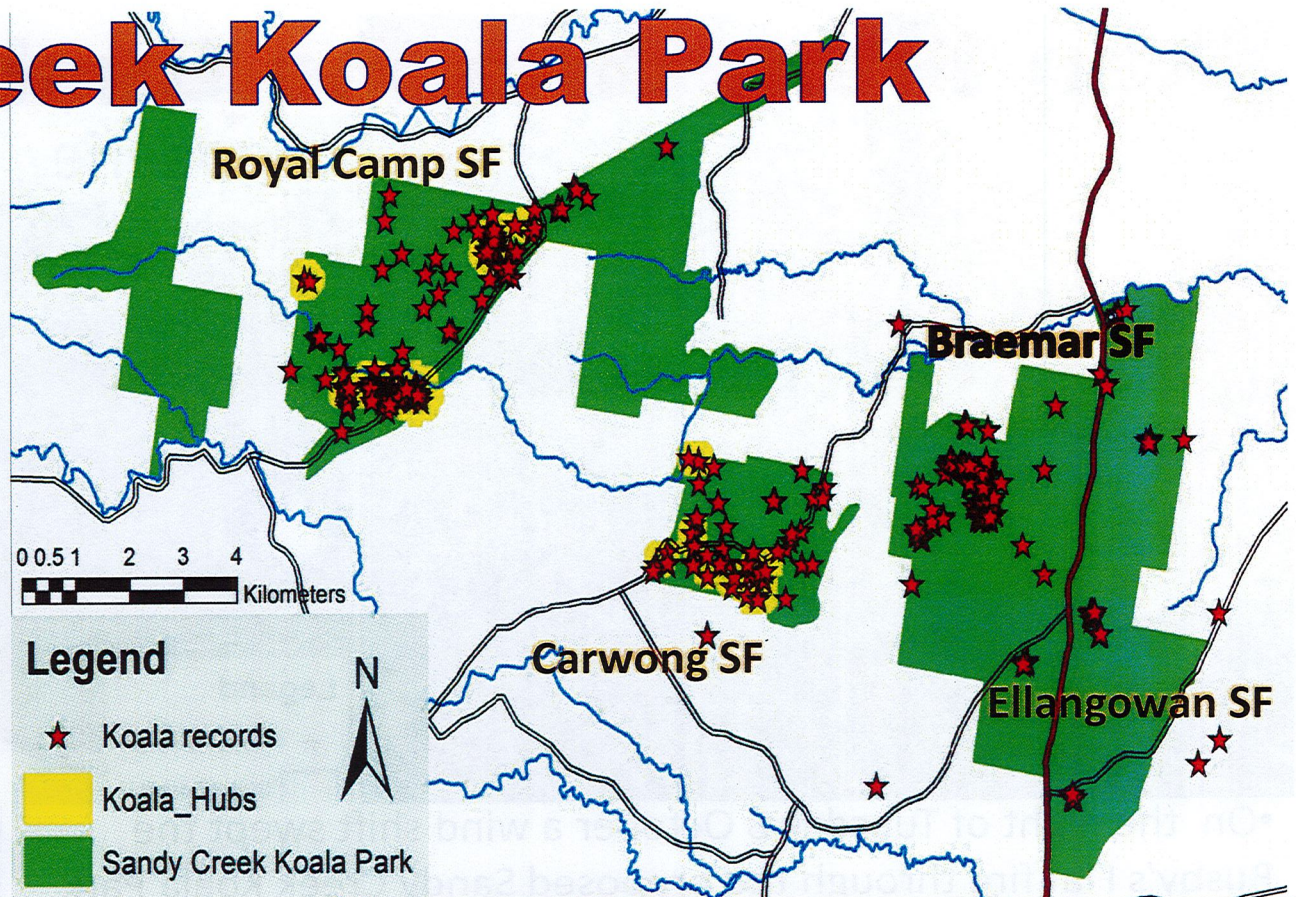


Sandy Creek Koala Park

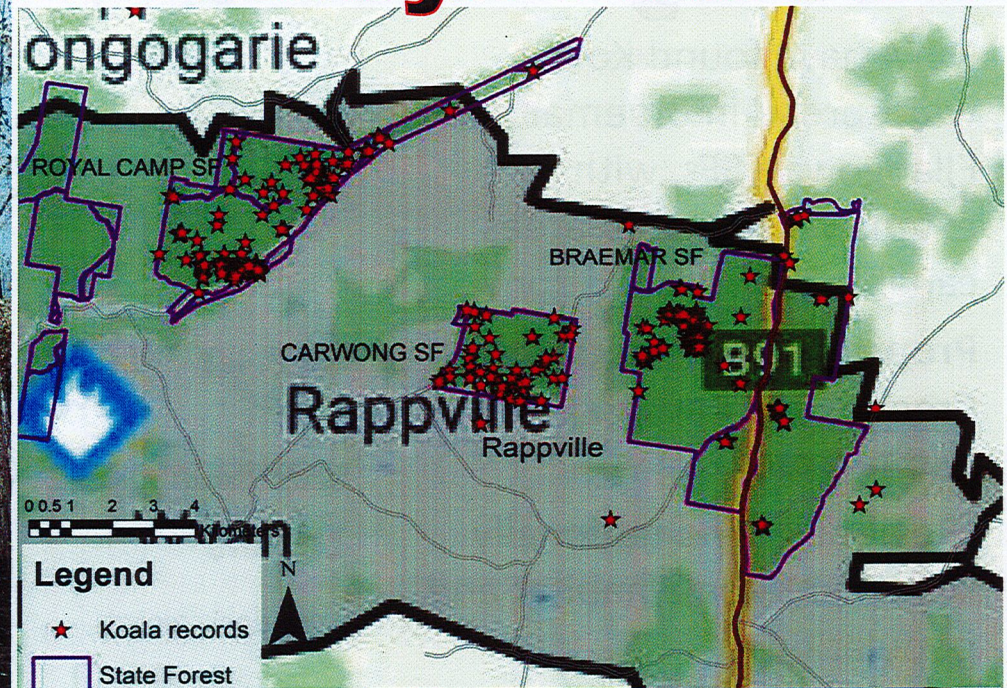
NEFA have found Koalas widespread in Braemar and Ellangowan SFs, with extensive degraded areas capable of rehabilitation.

Propose 7,000 ha Sandy Creek Koala Park to protect and restore:

- Regionally and nationally significant Koala habitat and population.
- An Endangered Ecological Community
- Homes for 2 Critically Endangered, 1 Endangered, and 30 Vulnerable animals.
- Habitat for 4 Endangered and 1 Vulnerable plants.
- 6,243 ha (91%) of inadequately reserved ecosystems.
- Forests carbon storage and sequestration.



Then there was the Busbys Flat Fire



- On the night of Tuesday 8 October a wind shift swept the Busby's Flat fire through the proposed Sandy Creek Koala Park
- The fire did not crown, but incinerated the understorey and cooked large areas of dense regrowth overstorey
- Koalas were able to seek refuge high up in canopies of the largest surviving trees
- With no water and desiccated gumleaves the surviving Koalas were left to die a slow death
- It is outrageous that there has still been no rescue mission for injured and starving Koalas
- Surely the Government should do something.

