

Middle Ridge

Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Area

Forestry Corporation acknowledges the traditional Aboriginal custodians of this land.

Ourimbah State Forest

Please help us to protect, nurture and manage sensitive Aboriginal cultural heritage sites and places. Aboriginal cultural heritage and the surrounding landscape are part of living heritage and are a non-renewable cultural resource.

It is an offence to harm, damage or desecrate Aboriginal sites and heritage places under the *NSW National Parks Wildlife Act, 1974*.

Please report any suspicious activity to:

- Forestry Corporation on **1300 655 687** or email info@fcnsw.com.au
- Office of Environment and Heritage on **131 555**.

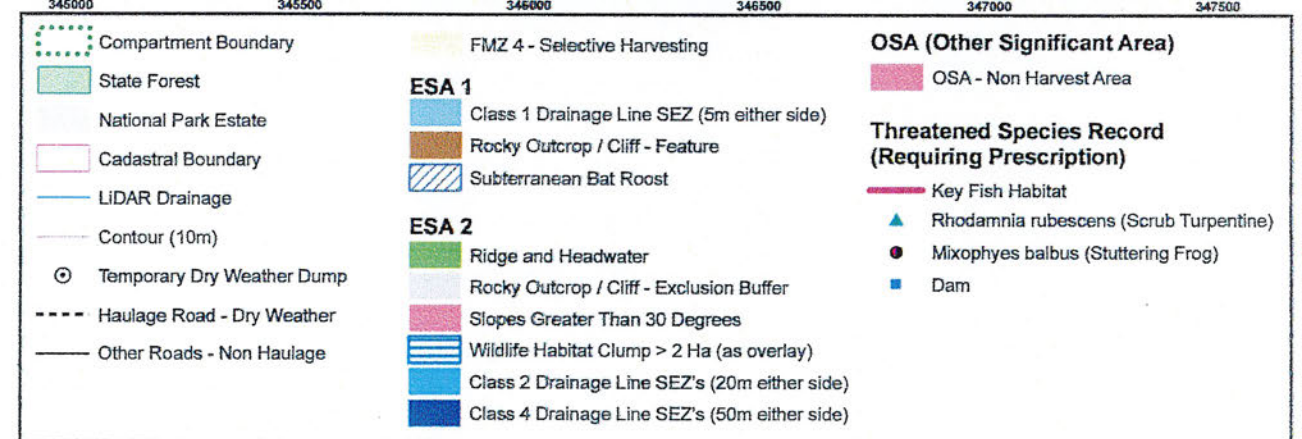
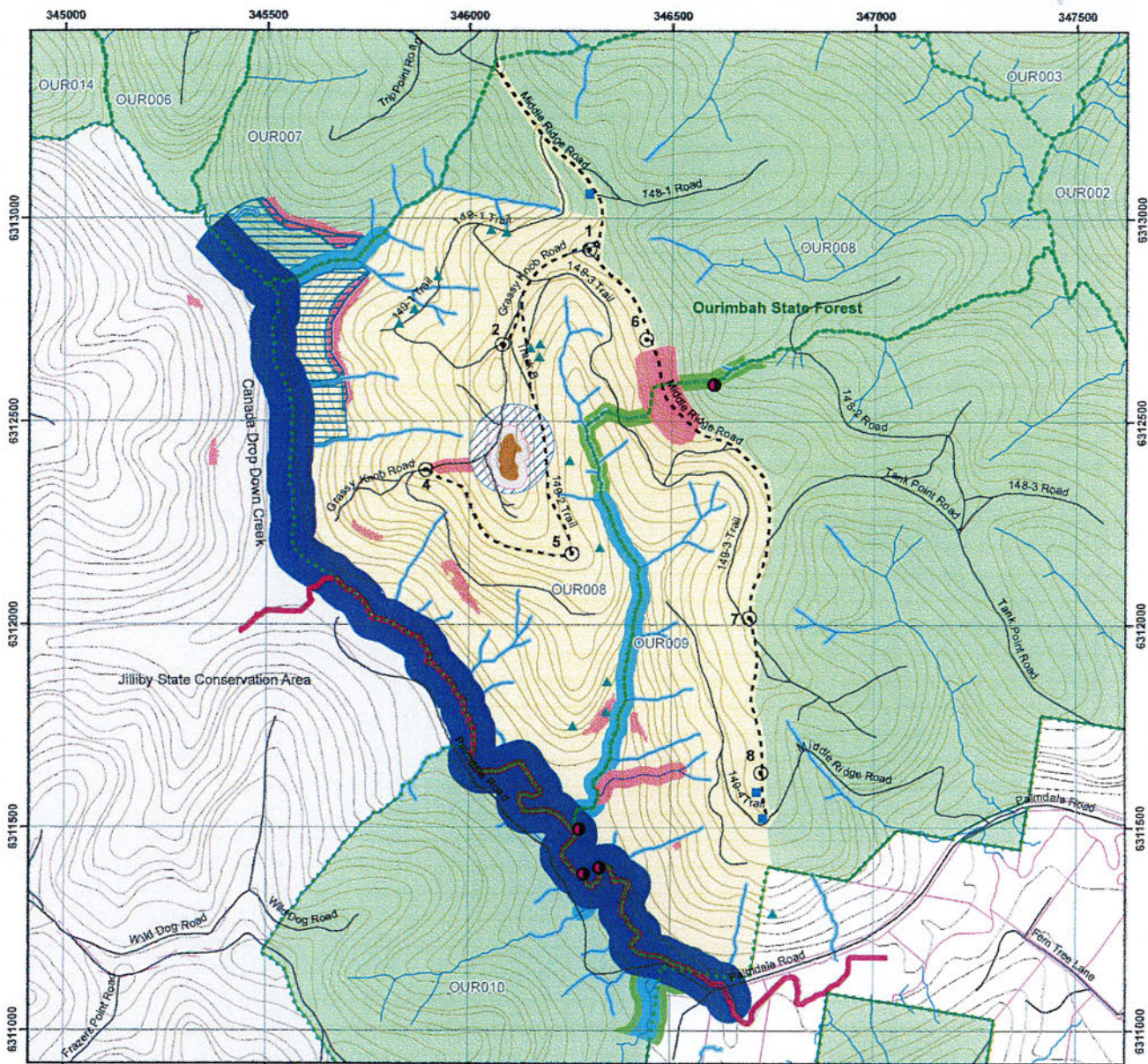
Harm includes, damaging, scratching, driving vehicles and impacting the fabric of the rock, or artefact and all the cultural values of the place.

Penalties of up to \$1.1 million and imprisonment apply.



**Forestry
Corporation**





To Whom It May Concern,

Giinagay (Hello),

My name is Brett Duroux and I am the Chairperson of Gugiyn Balun Aboriginal Corporation. I have been hired by Renee Sales and her family, the Darkinung/Darkinoong Traditional Custodians, to represent issues of cultural heritage, namely cultural sites. The aforementioned Corporation is run cooperatively between myself and Renee in order to address all aspects of cultural heritage, identification, registration, training and inspections.

Renee Sales, a Darkinung Traditional Custodian, is under direction from the Elders in her family to be vigilant regarding the state of their cultural heritage sites. Renee's father's family were cultural heritage officers and knowledge holders of the local area, as well as founding members of Darkinung Local Aboriginal Land Council (DLALC).

The Ourimbah Community contacted Renee Sales through Gugiyn Balun Aboriginal Corporation regarding the cultural site in Ourimbah State Forest where we are aware Forestry intends to log. After reading multiple reports, including the harvest plan, we found the recommendations of the cultural heritage survey very disappointing, especially where it was stated that 'vehicles were allowed to traverse the site for haulage and snagging'.

There also appeared to be many gaps of information and lack of local cultural knowledge of the area.

I have spent approximately 35 years reading protocol and consultation processes put into place by the NSW government. The concerns of the Traditional Custodians of Ourimbah are shared by the area's local community. These are also concerns shared by the three nations of my own lands, namely Gumbaynggirr, Bundjalung, and Yaegl, lands upon which Renee and I have worked side by side in training and registering sites.

I.E Section 3A of the Pacific Highway upgrade on the Glenugue Massacre site where we worked with State Forestry/Forestry Corporation to protect and hand back the lands to the Aboriginal people. We worked with a range of Forestry representatives including Trevor Donnelly, Robyn Bancroft and Dallas Donnelly.

After being contacted by the community of Ourimbah, we agreed to visit the site in December. We undertook the long walk along Middle Ridge Road from Jeeps Revenge with our two daughters and a group of community members to access the site in question.

In all honesty, the hardest part of our work is to see the evidence of desecration of cultural heritage. Walking through compartments that had previously been logged (as recently as 2020 we were informed) there were clear violations and lack of protections put into place. Upon reaching the Middle Ridge Road site we examined damage all along the surface of the stone where there were two grooving sites, as well as graffiti all over rock paintings. Despite the signs at either end of the site stating that it is an offense to harm, damage or desecrate Aboriginal sites, the total lack of compliance by the governing bodies itself is evident. The site has been desecrated through lack of protection yet also a lack of education of its spiritual significance. To know that Forestry is allowing vehicles to traverse the site for their operations clearly shows that they are failing to protect and care for this already damaged area. In addition the logging buffer in which Forestry had for the site appeared totally inadequate, with signs of logging occurring right up to the site.

With all due respect we strongly recommend that a further survey, in fact, a proper survey is done as soon as possible in order to prevent any more damage occurring to this and the surrounding sites.

Jeffery Lawson, a Federal Candidate for Roberston was informed of our visit and visited the area separately.

In addition to Jeffery, we are also notifying all the bodies of the area who have been involved in the impact assessment study, as we have a duty of care to the land and the community to report to any environmental, cultural damage to bodies such as the DPIE, EPA, Resource Regulator, Heritage NSW, Environmental Board, The Premier and Cabinet.

Currently there is a huge problem with Aboriginal sites being destroyed through development and we would like to remind you that Aboriginal site desecration is a punishable offense in the court of law. We currently work in training of site awareness, identification procedures and protocols for people interested in entering the field so that we, the Traditional Custodians, can educate site officers in order to create a productive future in assisting bodies and agents, as well as conducting cultural education tours so both the Council and community can partner with and work alongside the Traditional Darkinung Custodians.

As Renee Sales's representative, I have been instructed as Chairperson of Gugiyin Balun Aboriginal Corporation to state that we are intending to place a cease and desist stop work

order on any logging activities, present and future, planning to be undertaken by Forestry Corporation in Ourimbah State Forest as harmful impacts will be incurred upon Aboriginal ceremonial grounds and aboriginal cultural sites through any logging activity Forestry intend to do. We also acknowledge the harm to the local environment and its endemic ecosystem if logging operations (namely yet not exclusively plan 200001035) go ahead.

I have placed our contact details below. Please be in touch with any inquiries or concerns. We look forward to further correspondence and would like to clarify that an automated response will NOT be accepted as a response.

We eagerly await your communication within the 21 days as per the normal response period, which will be noted upon Forestry receiving this email. A lack of response will result in further legal action, as this letter is a legal notice of intention of action regarding the highly significant desecration of an Aboriginal Cultural site.

Please see attached document with all the photos taken of the site's damages and desecration.

EMAIL : gugiynbalun@gmail.com

Yours sincerely,

Brett Duroux

Chairperson

Gugiyn Balun Aboriginal Corporation



OURIMBAH STATE FOREST - A Letter Of Concern Over Harvest Plan by State Forestry and Representatives

1 message

Gugiyin Balun <gugiyinbalun@gmail.com>

Mon, 21 Feb 2022 at 6:42 pm

To: OEH HD ACHAC Secretariat Mailbox <ACHAC.Secretariat@environment.nsw.gov.au>, OEH HD Heritage Mailbox <HERITAGEMailbox@environment.nsw.gov.au>, OEH NPWS Aboriginal Heritage and Partnerships Mailbox <aboriginalheritageandpartnerships@environment.nsw.gov.au>, edonsw@edonsw.org.au, supporters@edo.org.au, info@fcnsf.com.au, wyong@parliament.nsw.gov.au, emma.mcbride.mp@aph.gov.au, lucy.wicks.mp@aph.gov.au, terrigal@parliament.nsw.gov.au, Gosford@parliament.nsw.gov.au <Gosford@parliament.nsw.gov.au>, @parliament.nsw.gov.au, hornsby@parliament.nsw.gov.au <hornsby@parliament.nsw.gov.au>, @abc.net.au, wiresmedia@icloud.com, @gmail.com, Editorial <editorial@centralcoastnews.net>, ccc@centralcoastnews.net <ccc@centralcoastnews.net>, manager@centralCoastNews.net <manager@centralcoastnews.net>, editor@peninsula.news <editor@peninsula.news>, news@newcastleherald.com.au <news@newcastleherald.com.au>, @austcommunitymedia.com.au

From: Gugiyin Balun Aboriginal Corporation

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