



6 July 2005

The Hon J Thwaites MP
Deputy Premier
Minister for Water and the Environment
Level 3, 1 Treasury Place
MELBOURNE 3000

**By Fax: 9651 1188
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Dear Minister Thwaites

PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH THE OTWAYS NATIONAL PARK

Lawyers for Forests, ("LFF") welcomes the introduction of the National Parks (Otways and Other Amendments) Bill 2005 to Parliament and the proposal to establish the Great Otways National Park and the Otway Forest Park.

Whilst LFF supports the Bill, and congratulates the Government on the creation of the extended Great Otways National Park, LFF does have a few concerns with the Bill.

In particular:

1. LFF understands significant areas of old growth and high conservation forest have not been included in the Great Otways National Park, and are included in the Otway Forest Park. These areas include the headwaters of the Aire River and the Holywater/Wait-a-While creek catchment.
2. LFF believes and licences issued under section 130 or 138 of the Land Act 1958 or section 16 of the Wildlife Act 1975 should not continue past the commencement date of the Bill, or at least, if they do expire before 31 December 2006, should not be extended to that date.
3. The Bill provides that licences issued under the Forests Act 1958 within the Otway Forest Park will continue to the date of their expiry, which LFF understands is at the latest, the end of the 2007/2008 logging season. These licences will be inconsistent with the proposed reservation of the Otways Forest Park. These licences will also authorize the destruction of old growth and high conservation forest, and detrimentally affect water catchments. LFF urges the Government to terminate these licences before the end of the 2007/8 logging season.

LFF would be pleased to meet with you to discuss these issues further.
Otherwise please contact Vanessa Bleyer or Andrew Walker on the numbers
provided below if you have any questions.

Yours faithfully



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