



MEDIA RELEASE

Production of fish at Snobs Creek under threat

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The future of Snobs Creek fish Hatchery is under direct threat due to a plan by Vic Forests to clear-fell around 1,500 hectares of Mountain Ash in the Snobs Creek valley. Some of the proposed coups are directly above the falls, and relatively close to the hatchery.

The location of the Snobs Creek hatchery was carefully chosen due to the fantastic water supply provided by the pristine Snobs creek. The creek supplies cool clean water that is ideal for the breeding of salmonids. The hatchery produces Brown & Rainbow trout, Chinook salmon, Murray cod, Macquarie perch & Trout cod. The hatchery provides fish to rivers, lakes and impoundments across Victoria which, in turn, supports a huge recreational fishing community.

Clear fell logging a catchment directly leads to the following;

- o increase in turbidity & suspended solids
- o Long term reduction in flows
- o Increase in stream temperatures
- o Increase in the variation of stream flows

Water for the hatchery from the adjacent Goulburn River is often unfeasible due to a number of reasons including disease issues, water quality issues including turbidity and the high costs of pumping the water to the hatchery.

Representative groups Native Fish Australia (Vic) and the Australian Trout Foundation hold concerns about the negative impacts of the proposed clear fell logging on the future operations of the hatchery.

“NFA (Vic) had a look at the Snobs creek and surrounding catchment with a number of concerned anglers recently and met with a number of passionate locals” said NFA (Vic) President Tim Curmi. “During the tour we inspected many logging coups and discovered little regard for forestry practices”.

The Australian Trout Foundation has confirmed that it is definitely NOT opposed to logging. President, Terry George however stated “Whilst we understand the importance of the logging industry to the state of Victoria, it is imperative to realize that at present there is only one government fish hatchery in the whole state of Victoria”

The facility is the only commercial hatchery in Victoria where the endangered Trout cod and Macquarie perch are currently bred. Losing this will severely restrict the recovery plan for both species” said Tim

ATF & NFA (Vic) have discussed this issue and agreed that:

“This hatchery supports the whole of the state’s freshwater recreational fishing industry of which the value (in dollar terms alone) far exceeds the value of logs to be extracted from this particular catchment”

“There are numerous alternative areas in the state suitable and available for logging which will not put this hatchery in any sort of jeopardy. The loss of such a small percentage of available forest will be far less costly to the logging industry than is potentially at stake for recreational fishing”

“That Vic Forests intend to proceed with logging in this catchment and put the entire breeding future of freshwater fish in this state at risk for the sake of what essentially amounts to a small percentage of logging across the entire state is absolutely mindboggling, and that one has to question why a state government that is prepared to put some \$46m into recreational fishing during their term in office, should allow this to go ahead is even more mind boggling”

“The combination of the effects of climate change and the extensive clear-fell logging in the catchment is likely to lead to altered flows in Snobs Creek, a dramatic decline in water quality and quantity, and is a direct threat to the future of the hatchery” said Tim

“We believe that Minister D’Ambrosio and Minister Pulford needs to urgently intervene to stop this logging”.

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