



MEDIA ALERT

Wednesday 21st March 2018

Large crowd expected at Parliament House, midday today

A substantial crowd is expected at Parliament House today for the delivery of 15501 hand-written signatures calling for the immediate protection of High Conservation Value forests and the transition of the timber industry out of native forests.

It will be the largest environmental petition tabled in the Legislative Council since 2000.

Environment Minister Stephen Dawson MLC will receive the petition and address the crowd.

“Over 200 people have joined our team to collect a phenomenal number of signatures calling on the McGowan Government to immediately act on its forest promises,” said Jess Beckerling, convener of the WA Forest Alliance.

“These 15501 petitioners expect the McGowan Government to get forest policy back on track after an horrendous 8 years under the Barnett Government.

“The Forest Products Commission is ploughing ahead with an out-dated and unpopular plan developed under the Barnett Government and is now seeking to increase logging of native forests for low-value products.

“We need the McGowan Government to take urgent action to bring the Forest Products Commission into line and protect High Conservation Value forests as promised in the lead-up to the election.

“We have had thousands of conversations with people over the past couple of months. People are angry that forests are still being industrially logged almost entirely for woodchips and fuelwood. They are horrified by the FPC’s plans to start burning native forest logs for energy and want immediate action.

“Native forest logging is operating at a financial loss and job numbers are low and declining. It is time for the transition plan set out by our Forests For Life Plan to be put into place,” said Ms Beckerling.

President of the WA Farmers Beekeeping Section, Leilani Leyland, who will be speaking at Parliament in support of the petition tomorrow, said, “Beekeeping is one of the most sustainable agribusiness industries, which ticks all the boxes for jobs and growth in regional areas, but by constantly burning and logging this resource, the State Government is jeopardising this small but important and valuable industry, with massive growth potential.”

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