

ADI Residents Action Group
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Thursday, 15 April 2004

Letter by fax
Bob Debus
Minister for the Environment
Level 36, Governor Macquarie Tower,
1 Farrer Place, Sydney NSW 2000

Re: ADI Site St Marys – DEC survey for Koalas and other threatened species

Dear Minister

You are probably aware by now that scat found on the ADI Site by members of the ADI Residents Action Group, who also video taped the finding, has been positively identified as belonging to that of a Koala. The scat was found late last year and was sent to an authority on Koala's Associate Professor, Robert Close, of the University of Western Sydney. Professor Close has stated that it is Koala scat. He then sent it to the office of the Senior Research Officer at the NSW Department of Environment and Conservation for further examination and again it was stated that the scat belongs to that of a Koala.

WIRES records show that a Koala was removed from the fence line of the ADI Site over a decade ago, a Koala was also found in a backyard in the middle of Mt Druitt, Koala road kill was found adjacent to the ADI Site and ex employees of ADI Ltd and local residents have stated seeing Koalas on the ADI Site. Recently DEC officers had reports of a Koala at South Windsor, DEC Officer, Tanya Leary, reported hearing Koala calls whilst researching in Windsor Downs Nature Reserve.

Minister the scat finding is not a one off and it is obviously clear that Koalas exist on or near to the ADI Site.

As the DEC is in the process of developing a Koala Recovery Plan for NSW we urge you to consider this new evidence and commit the DEC to conducting or facilitating a comprehensive Koala survey of the ADI Site and other bushland areas of Western Sydney. This would ensure that the Recovery Plan accurately reflects all reported populations of Koalas in NSW.

ADI RAG recently spoke with the Australian Koala Foundation who expressed interest in being part of any future research of Koalas at the ADI Site and in Western Sydney. The AKF stated that soon they would be meeting with the DEC's Senior Project Officer, Dan Lunny, in Sydney to discuss issues relating to Koala protection. We suggest that this would be the perfect opportunity for the DEC and the AKF to commence discussions about a comprehensive Koala study of the ADI Site and surrounding areas.

Minister, ADI RAG recently had a meeting with Lend Lease, they were informed of the Koala scat finding. Although they rejected claims of the existence of Koalas they stated, in the presence of the Member for Lindsay, Jackie Kelly, that Officers of the DEC can access the ADI site whenever any research into the existence of flora and fauna is required. This contradicts claims by certain DEC Officers who have repeatedly told us that they are stifled in searching for species on the ADI Site because they cannot access the site without the permission of the landowner. The landowner/manager has now clarified that there are no impediments in place for the DEC if they wish to conduct any form of flora and fauna studies on the ADI Site.

Minister we seek from you an urgent response to this matter.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. D. Brown'.

Geoff Brown
Convenor
ADI Residents Action Group