



**TIMBER NSW**

3 October 2025

*An economically, socially and environmentally sustainable timber industry.*

## Media Release

### **Janelle Saffin plays Trump card**

Minister Saffin's column in The Northern Rivers Times this week reinforced that the Minister for Small Business and Minister for the North Coast is clearly divorced from both responsibilities.

According to Timber NSW Chief Executive Maree McCaskill, 'It was only a matter of time before a Trump equivalent appeared in Australia, but nobody predicted it would be in the form of an ALP Minister in the Minns Government.

"Minister Saffin parroted the same old lies about koalas becoming extinct by 2050. She stated that the park will now protect over 12 000 koalas, but that is part of the stable and increasing group currently thriving in state forests. The Government did not survey the national park area which should have even more koalas as the area is larger.

'The Minister deliberately ignores findings from the CSIRO koala monitoring programme which showed that in 2024 there were well over 95 000 koalas in the northern zone of Australia.

'The Minister also said the park will protect over 100 threatened species and old-growth forests but these forest areas are already protected across NSW and have been for 25 years!

'Minister Saffin says there are 100 jobs in the new national park and for that, the Government is destroying entire regional communities and more than a thousand jobs.

'To add to the insult the Minister added Trump-like fabrications about consulting with unions and working through a transition package for workers etc.

"Sound-bites about support to workers in the sustainable forest industry ignore the fact that not one cent has been seen by workers under threat of unemployment while negotiations take place with mills. Not one cent has been seen by businesses or contractors whose core activity was stopped with 24 hours' notice, and not one cent has been considered to support families, communities and non-forestry businesses damaged by the government's political decision. The Minns government had two years to plan this!

"Both Victoria and WA have delivered similar blows to their forest workers but they compensated individuals devastated by loss of career and income. Minister Saffin's NSW Government has offered an insulting package worth only 20% of that delivered to workers in Victoria.

"We note that Ministers Saffin and Sharpe – advocates for the Great Koala National Park will keep earning their salaries of between \$315 000 and \$330 000 each year – something a timber worker can only dream of", said Maree McCaskill.

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