Leard Forest mining audit released

The Department of Planning and Environment has released a summary report for the biodiversity and Aboriginal cultural heritage audit carried out on the Leard Forest mining precinct in February 2015.

The audit led to $12,000 in fines being imposed on the three mines operating in the area.

The audit found that:

- Boggabri Coal had conducted 7.7 hectares of unauthorised understorey (or lower growth) clearing of native vegetation. The company was fined $6,000 and required to implement an action plan including rehabilitation of the area, providing an extra 19 hectares of offset land and a review of procedures to ensure no further unauthorised clearing.
- Maules Creek Coal had not fully implemented its biodiversity management plan. The company was fined $3,000.
- Tarrawonga Coal had not fully implemented its flora and fauna management plan. The company was fined $3,000.

The Department has also agreed to accept action plans from the companies to address the non-compliances and will follow up to ensure these are implemented.

A departmental spokesperson said that the summary report was now publicly available.

“Our compliance officers conduct regular inspections and unannounced spot-checks of mines to make sure they are operating in accordance with project approval conditions.

“The Department has recently doubled the number of compliance officers working across the State,” the spokesperson said.
