

14 December 2010

Falls Creek man fined \$6,000 for illegal clearing

Shoalhaven City Council has been successful in taking court action against a Falls Creek man charged with illegally clearing trees from his property without the appropriate development consent.

Council Rangers successfully prosecuted a man for clearing trees on his McArthur Drive property without obtaining development consent.

At Nowra Local Court on Friday, 6 December 2010 Colin Catlin of Falls Creek was convicted and fined \$6,000 for cutting down trees on his property before lodging a development application. He was also ordered to pay Council's costs.

The court heard that in June 2010 Mr Catlin cut down 10 trees on his property at McArthur Drive.

In sentencing Mr Catlin the Magistrate said that the courts want to send a clear message to people who cut down trees without first obtaining the appropriate Council approvals.

Following a recent resolution of Council, the City Rangers are now increasing their focus on all unauthorised development within the city.

Council's Manager Ranger Services Dave Martin said Council staff are consistently taking action against people who illegally clear their land or who engage in illegal clearing on other property. "Anyone found to be carrying out such unauthorised development can expect a similar outcome in the courts," Mr Martin said.

This is the latest in a succession of successful prosecutions Council has conducted in recent years over illegal clearing of trees. The previous conviction was for illegal clearing of land at Jerberra Estate where the courts imposed fines and costs of \$12,500.

All citizens who are thinking of clearing trees or flora on their property are urged to seek clarification from Council's Development and Environmental Services Group before carrying out any development works if they are not sure if it is permissible or requires consent.

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