

Submission Cover Sheet

Fingerboards Mineral Sands Project Inquiry and Advisory
Committee - EES

828

Request to be heard?: No

Full Name: Kenneth Free

Organisation:

Affected property:

Attachment 1:

Attachment 2:

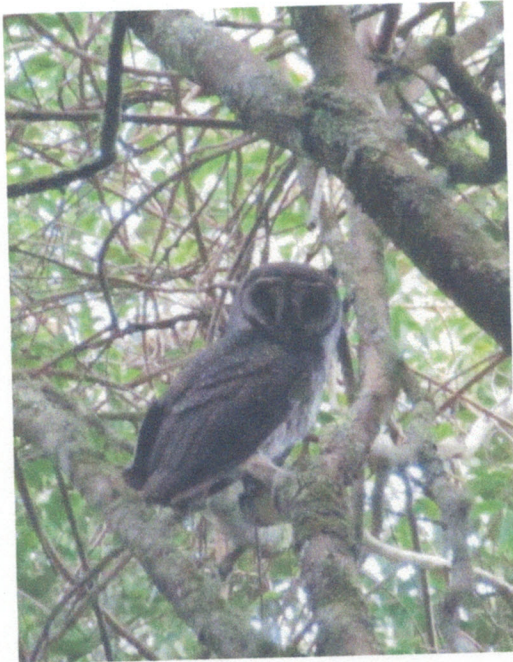
Attachment 3:

Comments: See attached submission

SUBMISSION ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT EFFECTS STATEMENT FOR THE FINGERBOARDS MINERAL SANDS MINE PROJECT

I am writing this submission because I am strongly opposed to the mine. Kalbar acknowledges that the mine site is only 4.4 kms from the **Heritage listed** Mitchell River National Park (MRNP), home to many threatened fauna species. In particular, the many creek gullies in MRNP are habitat for Powerful Owls and Sooty Owls which hunt for prey in the areas surrounding the MRNP, including the proposed mine site.

I have lived in Gippsland for 17 ½ years and as a keen bushwalker spend as much time as possible in the MRNP where I see a wide range of fauna including Powerful Owls and Sooty Owls. Here are photographs taken in Scrubby Creek, a tributary of the Mitchell River:



Sooty Owl in Scrubby Creek



Powerful Owl in Scrubby Creek

Both the Powerful Owl and Sooty Owl are listed as **threatened** under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988, and the most recent studies estimate that the Gippsland population of Sooty Owls is less than 1 per 100 square kms. Both are **State Significant Fauna Species**.

The EES pays scant regard to the fact that these owls and other fauna use the proposed mine site to forage for food and in many cases use the tree hollows in the Forest Red Gums, **scheduled for removal**, as nesting sites.

Indeed, in the table on page 86 of the EES the comment against 15 species including Powerful Owls is "Known presence of these species in higher quality habitats in the region. There is no important or limiting habitat within the project area." This statement conveniently ignores the fact that these species frequent the area! The Sooty Owl is not even mentioned in the EES, perhaps because the authors assumed it didn't exist anymore.

Many of the comments in the EES are along the lines of "All of the birds have the ability to disperse into other suitable habitats outside of the project area."

So, they should just leave and let us get on with it! And when there's no habitat left, what then?