

Submission Cover Sheet

Fingerboards Mineral Sands Project Inquiry and Advisory
Committee - EES

835

Request to be heard?: No

Full Name: Helen Newman

Organisation:

Affected property:

Attachment 1:

Attachment 2:

Attachment 3:

Comments: See attached submission

Dear Inquiry and Advisory Committee Members.

My submission is concerning the EES for Fingerboards mineral sands mine project. Here are my reasons for opposition to the proposed mine.

I farmed for a number of years on a substantial property along the Mitchell River. I had first hand experience of drought during which times the river level was so low that our stock were able to cross onto properties on the opposing bank.

This obviously impacts the stock and domestic water supply with all the usual drought difficulties. Any added use of river water will greatly exacerbate difficulties for farmers relying on the river for their livelihood, and even more in dry times. Climate change with rising temperatures and more frequent droughts will increase need for river water.

I believe that dust contamination of crops and livestock pastures is likely in this proposed mining. The local agriculture sector provides a great deal of employment. Problems with maintaining local agriculture would impact this. Families in the mine area as well as end users of farm produce would be vulnerable to effects from the dust. The levels of radioactive substances from 45 metres below ground cannot be correctly assessed. Contaminated dust will settle on many dams and other water sources. The Mitchell River provides domestic water to a large settled area which is growing steadily. The quality and accessibility of water would be affected.

I now live in Bairnsdale, fairly close to the river. I already have lung disease, increased by contact with bushfire smoke as I imagine are many others. I worry about dust pollution and its possible adverse effects on respiratory problems.

Many businesses in the area which rely on tourism have already been significantly affected by bushfires, drought, Covid etc. The prospect of mining operations in the area will certainly not enhance the image of the area for tourists, further impacting businesses.

Loss of habitat for wildlife must be significant over the mine area. We have already had terrible loss of animals, insects and vulnerable vegetation with drought and fires. Roadworks and other mine-related infrastructure outside the actual mine area will surely also increase loss of habitat.

Our long farm boundary contains caves which have evidence of local Aboriginal habitation with smoke staining and mussel shells. Obviously a significant population in the past. Who knows what artefacts could be involved with large-scale mining in the area?

Many thanks to the panel members for your attention and the opportunity to make this submission

Yours faithfully

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Helen Newman.

Helen Newman