

# Submission Cover Sheet

Fingerboards Mineral Sands Project Inquiry and Advisory  
Committee - EES

# 846

---

Request to be heard?: No

**Full Name:** Susan Patton

**Organisation:**

**Affected property:**

**Attachment 1:**

**Attachment 2:**

**Attachment 3:**

**Comments:** See attached submission

①

Dear Inquiry and Advisory Committee  
Members,

I am writing this submission about the EES for the Fingerboards Mineral sands Mine & project which I strongly oppose the location of ~~for~~ the reasons outlined below.

The proximity of the open cut mine of 13 square kilometres poised above the heritage listed Mitchell River which has immense ecological and historical cultural value from its headwaters near Dargo to its mouth defined by the silt jetties in Lake King listed as the second largest in the world and the longest in the Southern Hemisphere.

I have lived near this river for 37 years and feel great concern for its health.

With recent droughts and bushfires over the last 20 years as well as more off<sup>river</sup> storage dams for town water use as well as agricultural the Mitchell River is already compromised. The salinity levels in the river increased last summer with low flow and many fish died. The Lakes also had algal bloom and fish kills as a consequence.

The prospect of a mine that contains toxic radioactive minerals when crushed becomes dust which Kalbar Resources has admitted would be

difficult to prevent. Knowing the amount and strength of the prevailing winds that would blow dust over the river and sediment would blow into the deep gullies which run off the headland during rain events, let alone that of the tailings dam.

At this stage there is no account of the dangers to the health of humans, animals, birds and fish, let alone the environmental impacts to drinking water and flow into the Lake and ocean.

This information needs to be fully disclosed and examined.

There are already health risks of life threatening illnesses in our community from former aerial & ground spraying for agricultural purposes, tailings run off from the Stocklands mine at Benambra, fire retardants and smoke from bushfires to name a few.

I myself have suffered from [redacted] [redacted] when I lived and worked on the Lindenow flats and had my tank water contaminated.

As a panel you have a duty of care to protect and ensure the safety of the community from any further impacts to their health.

The Mineral Resources (Sustainable Development) Act 1990 " aims to achieve a balance between mineral explorations

(3)

and operations while ensuring risks to the environment and community are identified and eliminated or minimised."

An audit report dated August 5<sup>th</sup> 2020 from the Victorian Auditor General's Office (VAGO) states that "they recently examined the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR) who regulates mining rehabilitation through its Earth Resources Regulation (ERR) unit... to determine whether its work minimises the State's exposure to rehabilitation liabilities."

This audit found that there were regulatory failures and concluded that there was a conflict of interest between ERR & DJPR... are not effectively regulating operators compliance with their rehabilitation responsibilities...

This exposes the state to significant financial risk because some sites have been poorly rehabilitated or not treated at all... if not addressed these sites also present risks to Victorians and the environment."

This report does not inspire confidence in the current process which although identified may take years to rectify.

Another concern is the removal of at least 700 mature trees of significance

(4)

Prior to the recent bushfires Victoria had removed about 70% percent of native vegetation for housing and agricultural purposes including logging and mining.

East Gippsland was known as having remaining significant habitat including remnant Redgum woodlands and native grasslands.

The mine requires significant ~~land~~ land that is predominantly native grasslands and mature Box & Redgum trees. This would impact upon the symbiotic relationship of flora and fauna and further threaten their survival.

The removal of habitat would further impact the runoff to the river possibly increasing soil erosion and adding further pressure on the River's health.

implications that impact all of the  
communities that surround the Lakes district.

Thanking you for this opportunity  
to make a submission,

(Susan Patton.