

Submission Cover Sheet

Fingerboards Mineral Sands Project Inquiry and Advisory
Committee - EES

852

Request to be heard?: Yes

Full Name: Peter Neill

Organisation:

Affected property:

Attachment 1:

Attachment 2:

Attachment 3:

Comments: See attached submission

Dear Inquiry and Advisory Committee members,

I am writing this submission about the EES for the Fingerboards mineral sands project.

This mining project is a very bad idea and I vehemently oppose it.

I believe it would be devastating to both the environment and the community.

My name is Peter Neill. I have lived in Bairnsdale since 1998. I also lived in the area in 1968 and 1969 as the Head Teacher of Bullumwaal Primary School. I am an artist, disability support worker and an owner-builder of my new home at Bullumwaal.

Two weeks ago I drove from Bullumwaal to Tabberabbera and on to Dargo over rugged mountains and through beautiful wilderness. I crossed the Wentworth, Dargo, Wonangatta and Mitchell Rivers returning through the Mitchell River National Park and the beautiful Mitchell River Valley to Bairnsdale.

I was in awe of the beauty and majesty of my back yard.

These are my mountains, my forests and my rivers. I share the ownership of this beautiful country with thousands of others who have come before me and who will follow me.

But as I drove through Glenaladale the sight of orange signs on property gates protesting against the KALBAR project was very unsettling.

The thought that this valley could be destroyed made me angry.

I don't hold title to land in the Glenaladale/Fingerboards area but I share a love for this country with many others and I call it 'my own'.

I am angry that I have to plead with my elected government to stop them from giving away something that belongs to me!

I am angry that a rich and powerful mining company, like KALBAR, can buy the opinion of some so called experts to say what the company wants them to say.

I am angry that my State and Federal members of Parliament and the East Gippsland Shire Council have been too (P***) weak to stand up for their constituents in Gippsland.

The community has, in great numbers, on many occasions, clearly told both KALBAR and the government that this mine is not needed, not wanted and would be indeed very dangerous.

I'm angry that the aboriginal heritage value of the land at and around the mine site will be violated. First Nations people throughout the world cherish and honour the land.

The land is part of their spirit, their dreaming, their past, their future.

Their land - the soil, the rocks, the rivers and lakes, the trees and plants, the birds and animals are part of their soul.

First Nations' people see it as their responsibility to respect and look after the land - so should we!

The proposed huge open-cut mine would violate that responsibility.

I'm angry because the effects of climate change have not been effectively examined by this EES.

We will continue to experience extreme weather conditions.

These weather conditions will get more extreme with each passing year.

Heatwaves will be hotter and longer

Droughts will be longer and more severe

Bushfire seasons will grow longer, hotter and more catastrophic.

Storms, high rainfall & high wind events will become more extreme.

I am angry, that despite there imminent climate change threats, we could allow this mine to steal our water supply from the Mitchell River and destroy hundreds of mature trees.

I am angry at the thought of tailings dams (containing toxic chemicals) at the mine, overflowing in times of flood and polluting our rivers and lakes.

I am angry that this mine could destroy our farming and vegetable growing industries and their communities in the Mitchell River valley by water theft and chemical and dust pollution.

I am angry that a mine could despoil the mighty Mitchell River and the Gippsland Lakes and effect the lives and livelihoods of thousands of Gippsland people.

My anger is equalled by my sadness.

Sadness at the thought of this mine being approved.

The proposed Kallbar Sand mine at Fingertboards is a very bad and destructive idea and should not be allowed to proceed - the risks of disaster are too great.

("You don't know what you've got 'till it's gone!")
Joni Mitchell 1970

I thank the committee for this opportunity to make this submission

Yours sincerely

Peter Neill.