

Nambucca Area Macadamia Growers Association (NAMGA)
Response to Draft North Coast Regional Plan
Potential mineral resource extraction - Valla Rural

Effects to our local Macadamia farms and area:

- 22 farms in effected area, 6 bordering, 28 directly affected.
- Potential financial cost \$25 000 to \$250 000 gross income per farm, average \$80 000 Total \$2.5M
- Nambucca Valley growers contribute 8 million dollars to the local economy.
- Most farmer's partners have professional jobs in the area which would be lost,
Eg: teachers, nurses, accountants, barristers, government employees, engineers,
truck contractors, to name a few.
- A number of farms have direct employees 4-5, farms currently engage contractors with specialized equipment for macadamias.
- Outside contractors working on Macca farms, electricians, mechanics, pruning contractors etc
- Backpackers Tourism.
- Nambucca Macnuts Co-operative Macksville owned by 60 shareholders would more than likely cease to trade owing to lack of throughput from affected farms. There are four direct employees. This factory services a wider area of macadamia growers with small holdings who would have nowhere local to sell their produce without involving large transportation costs
- Nambucca Macnuts factory has a feeder area from Tea-Gardens to Woolgoolga, Thora to Valla Beach would have to transport nut to Lismore an additional 300km freight.

Customers that use the Macnuts facility are local restaurants, bakeries, store holders, there is a large tourist trade passing and from organised tours from state to worldwide.

Nambucca Macnuts draws its income locally, state wide and from National and International markets including Japan, Germany, China, Korea & EU, all of whom demand highest quality, the money stays IN THE NAMBUCCA VALLEY.

- The Macadamia industry prices are at an all time high at the moment driving extra production and investment. This is a big incentive for future development for our farmers and indeed has seen farmers invest in improvements to equipment and farms with the aim of bringing more wealth and employment to our local region.
- Water quality is high on macadamia farmers management practices moving to a grassed orchard floor for less erosion control, water retention, cooler temperatures in orchard, storing carbon etc. We as locals also acknowledge other industries that rely upon pristine water quality; oyster growers, fisherman, tourists, boat charters and recreation. Protecting the Nambucca Water Catchment is of highest priority.

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- We note that the Nambucca Valley has recently named as having the best quality water
- Macadamia farms have a large biodiversity which needs protecting.
- Further our Nambucca area is regarded and prized for the high oil content in nuts, due in part to the location of the farms in this region and its temperate climate.
- Local growers Peter & Denise Ranking have just been rewarded for the Highest production per /Ha worldwide 2016, they received a similar award in 2015. Six farms in the area are fully organic with a large start up cost and extra cost of production. Any risk to organic status from mining activity would be closely scrutinized by Organic Certifiers for possible contamination also an increased cost.
- Native bee populations are at risk of declining, macadamia farms and existing vegetation help protect numbers.
- The macadamia industry is sustainable and is compatible with other farming industries.

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