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**Request to be heard?:** No

**Full Name:** David William Eagleson

**Organisation:**

**Affected property:** [REDACTED] Bairnsdale 3875

**Attachment 1:**

**Attachment 2:**

**Attachment 3:**

**Comments:** PROPOSED FINGERBOARDS MINERAL SANDS MINE The over-all economic benefits of this proposed mine do not stack up. Situated as proposed in proximity to the vegetable bowl of Victoria, the Mitchell River, and the holding dam for the water supply of the growing city of Bairnsdale, it would be impossible to prevent pollution from its operation. Major dust storms are likely to increase, carrying toxic elements from below the depth of ordinary dust. Despite claims by the mining company, considering the scale of operation and the drying climate, there is insufficient water for dust suppression and rehabilitation. Town water restrictions are now ongoing and expansion of the lucrative vegetable industry has been curtailed because of insufficient water. The economy of East Gippsland depends on the huge vegetable industry and tourism as well as being a retirement destination based on healthy lifestyle. All this would be put at serious risk by the mine. The underlying issue is that the mine is inappropriate in this area dependent on a clean and natural environment. The vegetable industry adds significantly to the economy of Victoria and Australia but could be jeopardised by even minute particles of radio-active dust. It is too much to risk for short term gain (possibly 18 years) when the vegetable industry could go on producing for decades, even centuries. The mine would be situated above the river and vegetable growing on land prone to intermittent flooding to the Mitchell River and so on to the Gippsland Lakes. The mining company have employed sophisticated and persistent manipulation of publicity in favour of the project, cultivating influential individuals, newspaper publicity and regular closed meetings with the shire council. There is deep concern in the community that political influence will over-ride genuine consideration of the EES process. Hollow promises of 'more jobs' albeit short term, ignoring the real assessment of potential loss of so many more jobs across agriculture, tourism, real estate, tourism and retirement service. The area proposed covers remnant habitat of threatened species, including ancient trees and Aboriginal cultural places. These places represent heritage of thousands of years that could be destroyed by a catastrophic project of less than 20 years. What concerns us in East Gippsland is that the decision-makers will be city centred, short term politically influenced, without clear understanding of the strengths and essential qualities of one of the most environmentally lovely places in Victoria. The people here are struggling against a sophisticated body of influence and finance. If allowed to progress the mine will irreparably damage our unique environment.