

Submission Cover Sheet

Fingerboards Mineral Sands Project Inquiry and Advisory
Committee - EES

65

Request to be heard?: No

Full Name: Nola Kelly

Organisation:

Affected property:

Attachment 1: Fingerboards_Min

Attachment 2:

Attachment 3:

Comments: See attached submission.

17 October 2020

Dear Inquiry and Advisory Committee members,

Re: Fingerboards Mineral Sands mining proposal

I am writing to you, as a person residing in East Gippsland, to express my extreme concern for this mining proposal in such a totally unsuitable location. The safety of both our food source and our drinking water would be at great threat from contamination should the mine be given permission by you to proceed.

The risks to public health are significant given the open cut nature of the project and the high levels of toxicity and radioactivity of the products being mined. There are many local people who rely on tank water and the Mitchell River, a short distance from the proposed mine site, provides the water supply for a large percentage of the population of the people residing in East Gippsland. Given that smoke from last summers bushfires managed to reach New Zealand it is inevitable that the fine dust will contaminate the Mitchell River as there is no way of ensuring that this would not occur.

The proposed tailings dam provides a further risk of contamination and given the reputation of destruction and damage from tailings dams around the globe it would certainly be a huge hazard risk. East Gippsland has experienced increased drought in recent years with scientific predictions of more droughts with even more severity to come. This area can not afford to sacrifice the more than 4GL of water that the mine will suck from the river and it would have a huge impact on the availability of water for residents, maintaining the health of the Gippsland Lakes, and the currently highly productive vegetable growing industry.

Quality food production is the backbone of a healthy society, and along with clean and unpolluted water, these are two of the most basic and important elements to sustain life. The Mitchell River vegetable industry is highly successful and employs over 2000 people directly. It has the potential to develop even further as demand for clean, local food grows. I personally buy many vegetables from this area and would not feel safe doing so if there was mining nearby. Prime agricultural land is hard to find and should never be destroyed.

We have all seen from the current pandemic that Australia must become totally independent in the area of food production. Australia can not afford to lose this productive food bowl. I urge you not to be responsible for the health impacts that allowing this mine to proceed would have on not only thousands of Gippsland people, but also people around the country who buy vegetables from this area.

Regards

Nola Kelly

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