



VEAC Central West Investigation.

[Greg Lean](#)

to:

veac@delwp.vic.gov.au

05/12/2018 01:28 PM

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From: [Greg Lean](#)

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To: "veac@delwp.vic.gov.au" <veac@delwp.vic.gov.au>,

Dear Sirs,

Re Submission to the VEAC Central West Investigation.

It is with much concern that I write to you objecting to the changes being considered which will restrict areas which are currently open to prospecting.

My wife and I are hobby prospectors (not miners) and owners of a Miners Rights issued by the Victorian Government. We carry out our prospecting with the utmost respect for the bush and cultural environment.

Although we have not come across any sign of indigenous artefacts, relics or sites, we do support the preservation of aboriginal heritage and culture as does the prospecting Club where we are members.

As such, if the proposal proceeds to restrict prospecting areas, we do have the following concerns and comments:

- As a general overview, emotionally it does not assist the indigenous cause to simply propose blanket exclusion zones without specific reason for designated areas. This approach has created a considerable amount of animosity plus distrust between indigenous groups and users of the bush. Surely it would be more equitable to identify sites then make these prospecting / recreational "no go" areas.
- By continuing to allow prospectors to use the area in question, it is more likely that any aboriginal artefacts or significant sites will be identified and then nominated for specific exclusion. Prospectors are the best group to achieve this as it an extreme rarity to see any other groups active (including indigenous) whilst on location.
- Locking up more land currently available to all, because of pressure from the aboriginal lobby groups and environmentalists, is discriminatory and will lead to unwanted animosity against the indigenous and environmental groups' causes.
- The protection of cultural heritage by exclusion is at the centre of the issue, so a second simple solution surely would be to open up a like amount of land suitable for prospecting which would appease all concerned.
- There will be a detrimental economic impact on the businesses of rural towns and other supporting industries (eg suppliers of camping goods, detector shops and the like). Prospecting regularly takes us into small country towns where if it were not for this hobby, we would not go. Along with many other likeminded tourist and other hobbyists (4WD, fishing, horse riding, bushwalking and photography groups), we contribute to their economy by spending on fuel, accommodation and food / drink; they are dependent on this tourist income which will fade by implementing your proposal.
- Prospectors protect the bush. Whilst prospecting, we regularly clean up the bush of rubbish and keep fire tracks clear. Our Club carefully manages bush camp fires which assists in reducing fire hazards such as fallen trees.
- We fully support the Dja Dja Wurrung people continuing to enjoy their rights as traditional owners as long as they also respect our right to do likewise. The current proposals, through closing prospecting areas, does not do this.
- In essence, we are very concerned about the proposal to close down areas of the bush and consequently our right to be able to access / prospect in Victorian Parks with particular focus on areas within the Golden Triangle.

Sincerely,

Helen and [Greg Lean](#)

Address:

E-mail:

Members of the PMAV (Melbourne Branch) and the Ivanhoe Fossickers Club