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a thriving community, locally active and globally aware

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Chair,
Victorian Environmental Assessment Council,
PO Box 500
EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002

VEAC Central West Investigation Draft Proposals Paper August 2018

We would like to add our support to the recommendations made in the Paper for upgrading so many valuable natural areas across central western Victoria to national parks and other reserves with a focus on conservation.

BEAM is located in Mitchell Shire. Mitchell Shire is in the gap along the Great Divide between the central western forests (Wombat Macedon area) and the eastern forests of Victoria. We have been promoting the creation of reserves and links on private land across this gap. One of our members proposed the "Piper Biolink" across this area, and Landcare has taken this idea and continues to develop the patches and corridors of native vegetation on private land that are starting to shape the Biolink. One of these links is the Tooborac to Cobaw Forest Link built by Nulla Vale Pyalong West Landcare Group. Our members also promoted the purchase of a large forested property at High Camp by Trust for Nature.

Mitchell Shire has few large conservation reserves. The largest is Mount Piper Nature Conservation Reserve at 100 hectares. To the east is Wandong Regional Park; this is around 890 ha adjacent to Mount Disappointment State Forest but is mainly used for recreation and firewood. Moranding Flora Reserve in Macedon Shire adjoins High Camp and is surrounded by private land. High Camp, Moranding FR and the Forest Link all provide corridors and stepping stones to Cobaw Forest. So the recommendation for a Cobaw Conservation Park is particularly welcome as a large reserve with a diversity of wildlife and a focus for our biolink projects.

We would like VEAC to consider a further investigation of the Strathbogie, Tallarook and Mount Disappointment Forests and surrounding country, westwards to the Goulburn River and the central western forests of this investigation. It is a logical next step in your reviews of public land use through central Victoria.

Yours Sincerely

Peter Lockyer
President