

From: Jim Wright
Sent: Sunday, 17 June 2018 5:29 PM
To: projects dhelkunyadja
Subject: Submission

My hobby is gold prospecting and I have followed it for over 30years when time allowed and now that I am retired I can give it more attention but the Joint Management Plan for the Dja Dja Wurrung Parks has raised some important concerns.

Prospectors are the largest number of individuals who frequently visit and use the State Forests/Parks and if the new "Management Plan" results in changing the current rules and regulations for all bush users then some serious impact will be felt not only in the prospecting community but also a host of other groups of bush users as well.

Interstate and even International prospectors regularly visit the Victorian Gold Fields plus of course the numerous prospectors from within Victoria itself and they all spend considerable amounts of money in the local communities to enable them to follow their hobby.

With any closure or even part closure of the Parks under the new Management Plan the impact on not only prospectors and bush user groups but also thousands of residents and small businesses across the region would be enormous.

Businesses in small towns across the State such as Dunolly, Talbot, Wedderburn, Inglewood and even places like Maryborough will all be severely and adversely affected. Businesses such as Prospecting and Fossicking equipment retailers, Camping supplies, Motels, Caravan Parks, Petrol Stations, Bakerys and General Stores would all be affected with some estimated to lose up to 50% of their business.

It's not hard to imagine that if the new Management Plan introduces restrictive policies (as has been indicated at your meetings) then as previously mentioned the repercussions would be devastating to small business owners in the area.

I believe that the "Plan" should at least be put on hold until a further investigation is carried out into the repercussions of any further restrictions on any or all bush user groups. Perhaps a Community Reference Group should be formed to investigate issues and if so I believe the Prospectors and Miners Association of Victoria (of which I am a member) should have a presence within that group and ask you to please take that into consideration.

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Note: Personal Contact details redacted for on-line publishing.