

Regis Resources – The McPhillamy Project and the effects on my family's businesses.

On site businesses operated from 2319 Mitchell Hwy VITTORIA NSW 2799

Goldfield Honey Aust Pty Ltd Directors – Vicki Lockwood and Jonathon Lockwood

Goldfields Honey, Bee and Pollination Services Pty Ltd – Managing Director - Vicki Lockwood

The Beekeepers in – Partners Vicki Lockwood and Claire Bennett,

Lockwood Beekeeping Supplies – Sam Lockwood

Central Ranges Brewing Company – Mark Lockwood

SLB Lawn and Garden Service – Scott Bennett

These businesses are operated by Managing Director Vicki Lockwood and her children Jonathon and Sarah Lockwood, Mark Lockwood, Claire and Scott Bennett and Samuel Lockwood. The founder Grant Lockwood passed away in June 2017.

Location – 2319 Mitchell Highway, VITTORIA NSW 2799 midway between Orange and Bathurst and approx. 2000 metres from the proposed McPhillamys Gold Mine.

This proposal has and is causing my family mental health issues, anxiety, personal stress and business stress on all the businesses, hence, the writing of this document. The time already consumed, and the time taken to write this would have been of far more benefit to my businesses or my family which include 5 grandchildren. This is a family run business established in 1982 and through expansion we now are finally located at our current location since 2003.

Together with my late husband Grant a lifetime has been spent building these businesses. We have also passed on our skills and knowledge to our four children who all have a major role in our diversity.

I am not at all experienced with the procedures of mining and find this whole process of what to do very daunting. I have been visited by various people from different sectors involved in impact studies, mining project managers ect. I am very confused, but I do know that no one is prepared to guarantee no effects on my business and my family.

#### **GOLDFIELD HONEY AUSTRALIA PTY LTD- GHA**

GHA is the largest beekeeping enterprises in Australia operating approx. 8,000 beehives with contracts for expansion over the next 5 years to 15,000 beehives. GHA and employs approx. 20 people. To be increase to 35 over the next 5 years.

We are the producers of fine Australian honey, honeycomb and beeswax.

Pollinators of a variety of crops/orchards including almonds, canola, lucerne, pumpkins, watermelons, apples cherries and stone fruit.

Our resources are getting scarcer what with not being able to access national parks, clearing in state forests and climate change occurrences such as drought, fires and floods.

The proposed site for the McPhillamy Mine has a very high impact on GHA. The proposed land to be used by the mine will clear and destroy 150 to 200-year-old unique and rare high-altitude yellow box trees and others. These trees of high importance to our apiary business These trees flower and produce nectar later than other yellow box trees to the west of Orange, so often we yield two crops of honey in one year.

The only land between our factory at Vittoria and the proposed mine is owned by the State Forrest of NSW. GHA pays a rental fee each year for the use of public land and we work closely with the State Forrest to use these lands. In the proximity close to the mine site we hold 19 bee sites. Where we place our bees is only metres from the tailings dam, the holding dams and the mine site. These bee sites are used nearly all year round as they are invaluable breeding sites that access not only the natural flora for nectar but also ground flora for pollen and breeding. Our queen breeding program is intense and exact, so the forest sites are used for mating. These beehives are checked and monitored for nutrition and nectar, mating, laying pattern ect. before we can use or sell them.

The proximity of these sites from our factory is invaluable, reducing travel time, labor and ensuring quality control.

### **CONCERNS**

Dust, lighting, noise, vibration, water, loss of resources.

**Dust** – Chemical residue and trace elements in the dust with gather in flowers hence affecting the nectar and pollen and then finding residues in the food chain.

There is also evidence of naturally occurring asbestos in the Vittoria State Forrest and in the proposed mine site area, if this were disturbed the residue could cause serious problems.

Landing on the factory roof and contaminating the rainwater which is used in the honey extracting plant, factory and vehicle cleaning.

The dust also contaminating soil and then contaminates taken up by the trees and eventually into the flowers and contaminating the pollen and honey hence the food chain.

**Lighting** – GHA has been informed that there will be night lighting, I am unsure of the effect of this on the bees but also it will pose a risk for workers at the mine as bees are attracted to light at night. The expert(Annette Allen) I spoke with on this subject at the last Regis Information day could not tell me how far the night lighting extends upwards or distance width.

**Noise/Vibration** – The constant noise and vibration will cause the bees to become more aggressive hence a work, health and safety issue with workers at the mine site.

**Water** – A beehive can drink as much as 11 liters of water per day, the residue from the tailings dam is sure to have an effect on the bees (this needs a study to be done over several years) there breeding and residue in the food chain.

Bore water is used at our factory in the honey extraction plant to top up rainwater tanks to ensure that we do not run out of water. Water is invaluable at our factory for washing down and general use. GHA is bqual accredited (see attached) our water is tested regularly, so if there were to be any contaminants due to seepage from the mine or the reduction in level of my bore my business would not exist. To maintain accreditation non contaminated water must be guaranteed.

**Loss of Resources** – The native endangered flora that will be destroyed is detrimental to our business, it is irreplaceable. GHA currently leases land from the State Government. Neighboring the McPhillamys proposed goldmine site is the Vittoria State Forrest (VSF) which GHA leases 19 beehives. Many of these sites are within metres of the mine area.

This area has already suffered the loss of natural resources with the destruction of native timbers being destroyed and being replaced with soft pine plantations i.e. The Vittoria State Forrest, Macquarie Woods and Mount Maquarie near Caroar Dam. However, amongst the plantation forest there remains pockets of natural timbers adding to the valuable beekeeping resources of this area. Also note that in the EIS it states that there is little value to bees in the forests but not only is there ground flora flower in the form of blackberries, weeds etc, the bees also produce propolis from the planted pines.

### **Agricultural Value from this Area**

**HONEY** Each year not the same source of honey is produced from the area. Each year an average 50kg of honey is produced from each beehive.

Vittoria State Forrest and the mine site is home to many different species which flower at different times these include -Peppermint, Yellow Box, Blakley's Red Gum and Stringy Bark. Approximately 1,500 beehives are kept in the VSF sourcing honey at one time during production producing approx. 75 tonne of premium Australian honey, a return to GHA of approx. \$400,000

**QUEEN BEE REARING** – 1,000 Nucleus Colonies are kept in the VSF annually from Nov-March. Although the VSF is mainly a pine plantation it is also a valuable source of pollen/nutrition for queen rearing. Sources of pollen Blakleys Red Gum, Peppermint, Stringy Bark, Green Apple, Bundy Apple, Brittle Jack, Manna Gum, Ribbon Gum and from the ground Flat Weed, Patterson's Curse, Scotch Thistle and Blackberry. Queens are caught on a 28 day cycle and with a 80% catch rate that means 800 queen bees/month produced. The queens are sold to other beekeepers and used in GHA own beehives. Value to GHA from VSF and mine site approx. \$24,000/month, \$120,000 / annum.

**NUCLEUS BEEHIVES** – During the months from November to March annually 1,000 Nucleus beehives are split from production beehives and on sold to other beekeepers or hobbyist. Value to GHA \$145,000/ annum.

**FLOW ON** – VSF and the proposed mine site is used to prepare and maintain the health of the beehives for almond pollination. Value to GHA 1500 beehives \$225,000

TOTAL GROSS INCOME FOR GHA FROM VSF AND PROPOSED MCPHILLAMYS MINE SITE AREA \$745,000. THE ONFLOW EFFECT TO OTHER BEEKEEPERS COULD ADD UP TO MILLIONS OF DOLLARS.

This is only direct benefits to our business from this area, other problems such as water contamination and water loss downstream will also affect other areas that we work our bees.

## **RESPONSE TO ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STUDY (EIS) - POTENTIAL IMPACT ON AGRICULTURAL USES**

### **HONEY -APARIAN ACTIVITIES**

1. Not a loss of habitat rather a loss of natural native resources for the bees to forage on.
2. Water Contamination. Bees will gather water from the mine site and tailings dam. Contaminated water will not only adversely impact the livestock itself but has the potential to contaminate the honey with unacceptable trace elements.
3. Dust will fall onto soil which will and anything flowering. Another way trace elements can leach into the food chain.
4. Bees are not placed in VSF for pine pollen!!! as the EIS states. They are there for the surrounding natural resources as referred to above , Yellow Box, Blakleys red gum ect.
5. In the EIS, "Box Gum" Woodlands are referred to, there are many other species of eucalypts apart from those such as peppermint. Our bees currently forage on several floral sources that will no longer exist if the mine proceeds.
6. Bees commonly forage a large radius for water. In Australia when temperatures are high most groundwater (dew, droplets, puddles) dry up. Bees will fly to dams and gather water from edges or floating matter in dams. It is highly likely the bees will source water from the TSF water.
7. Goldfield Honey Australia will be placing permanent beehives in VSF. GHA will be testing the honey regularly for the trace elements currently not found in the honey will be found if the mine proceeds (See attached)

N.B. Honey is not produced at the Beekeepers Inn as stated in the EIS (Surrounding agricultural users) honey is produced by flora which will be destroyed by the mine site. It also states that pollen is produced and does not mention nectar

**ECONOMIC** - The proposed mine is stopping expansion of any business until this is resolved which means that anything we had proposed is on hold time unknown.

The ongoing drought conditions are already causing much economic drain on our business, but I would estimate that GHA has already spent \$20,000 on time and resources for this project.

GHA is now having to engage an expert to do a control testing and monitoring on honey and dust so that we have results to compare if mine goes ahead. The approx. cost of this exercise will be approx. \$20,000 to \$30,000 an expense we really cant afford. On Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> he visited our office for a meeting and stated that in a previous meeting he said Regis would help financially to engage an expert, there has been no mention of this.

**EDUCATION** – GHA has just become an approved as a Pacific Island Employer and next week two trainee beekeepers arrive from Papua New Guinea. They will then take their skills back to their village so that they too can teach beekeeping.

We are also an approved employer with the Department of Education and this year employed two students who did their practical training with GHA in beekeeping as a HSC subject.

GHA are proud to be part of these programs but unfortunately, they will not be able to continue if the mine goes ahead as the beehives in the VSF are used for training.

**OFF SET LAND** Regis Resources has purchase off set land that offsets the natural timbers that will be destroyed. This is no offset for beekeeping as the whole beekeeping industry requires as many resources as possible. Destroying any native timbers is just not acceptable. The offset land is not five minutes from our factory where we can monitor our bees, queen bee breeding projects and nucleus beehives.

This submission is complicated and as GHA is no expert at writing this we are very willing to engage in discussions with Planning Industry and Environment or the Independent Planning Commission to explain our operations. My phone number is 0400655117.

Please find attached research papers re residue, contaminants in bees and honey. X 4

DON'T FORGET THAT BEES EFFECTS US ALL, ONE IN EVERY THREE MOUTHFULS OF FOOD WE EAT IS DUE TO BEES.

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