



Wombat Forestcare

August 3rd 2012

Hush hush gold rush for Wombat Forest

Wombat Forestcare has discovered that in the last three months the Department of Primary Industry (DPI) has secretly approved plans for a total of three gold mines in and around the Wombat Forest, a fourth gold mine was approved last year, and a fifth gold mine was given authority to commence in 1998 but has not yet started.

Draft mining work plans for another three gold mines have also been submitted to DPI, covering another 238 hectares of the Wombat State Forest.

Applications have also been lodged for two more mining leases covering another 40 hectares of the Wombat State Forest at Spargo Creek and south of Blackwood, which would bring the total number of mining leases in the forest to twelve, and the area covered by mining leases to over 430 hectares.

Four of the mines that have been approved by DPI occur in the Wombat State Forest, and may cover up to 15 hectares of forest. These are the much publicised one at Bullarto (MIN5349), one at Dales Creek approved this year (MIN5395), another north of Basalt approved last year (MIN5503), and the one west of Newbury with authority to commence mining granted in 2008 (MIN5059).

The other approved mine is on private land at Bolwarrah and is described as an open cut mine on a 3.6 hectare mining lease (MIN5485).

'Given the current totally inadequate laws relating to mining, these mines could commence in the near future without any real say by the community. DPI and the State Liberal government are overseeing a new gold rush for the region but failing to consult anyone or explore the environmental impacts of all these mines. All the proposed mines require major vegetation removal, loss of habitat and are likely to result in substantial degradation of waterways.' stated Murray Ralph from Wombat Forestcare.

Wombat Forestcare has also calculated that mining exploration leases or applications for mineral exploration licences cover over 70,000 hectares of this region, including the towns of Daylesford and Hepburn. Approximately 15,000 hectares of these are in the Wombat forest and the remainder mostly covers surrounding private land.

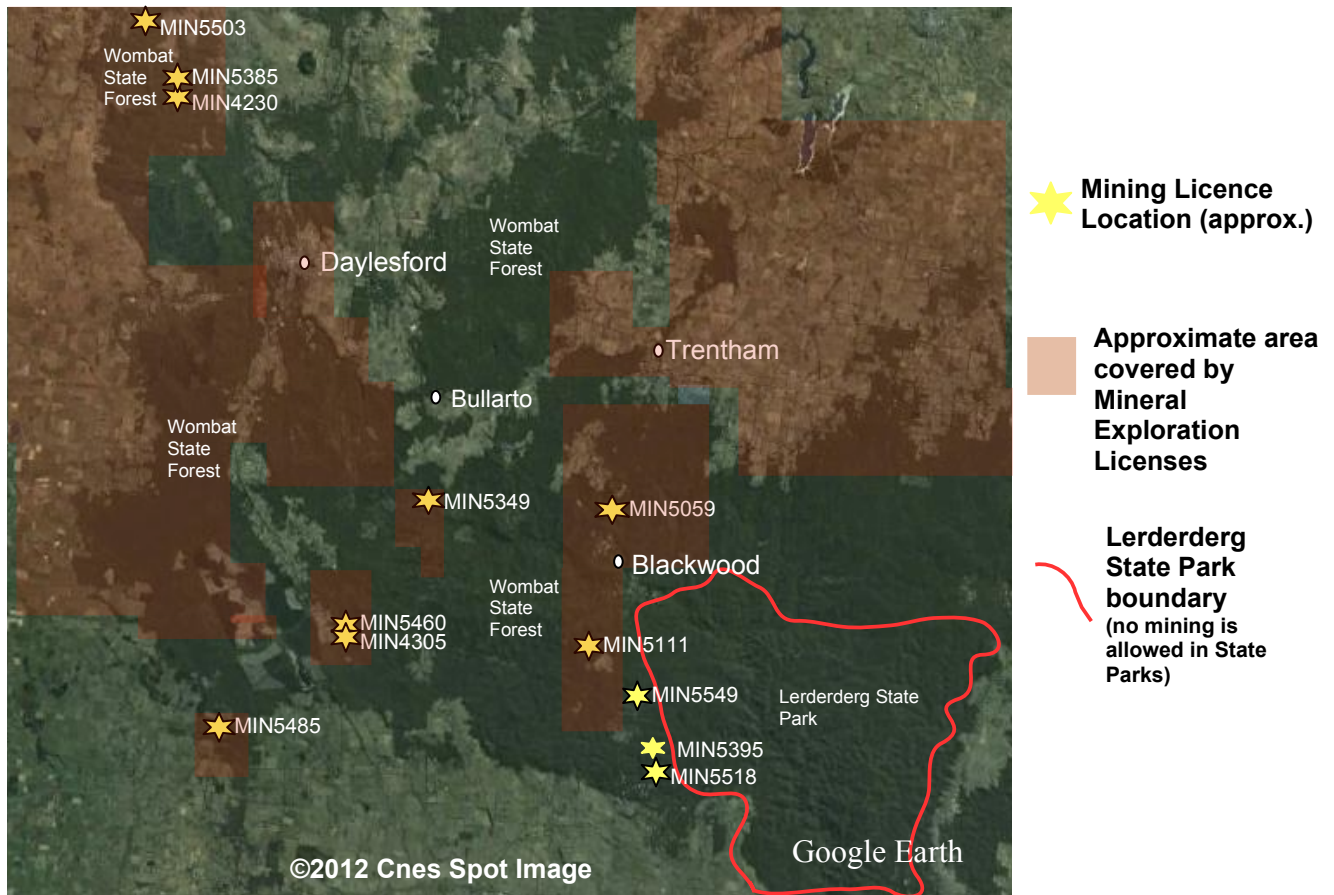
Murray Ralph also commented that *"This is all on top of the revelation that Fortitude Mining, the company proposing the approved open cut mine at Bullarto, are now publicly stating that their real aim is to extract 120,000 tonnes of ore for processing, over twenty times the 5000 tonnes outlined in the current proposal. This is just a taste of things to come as many of these other mines are also undertaking samples and are likely to be expanded."*

'Copies of approved Work plans and draft work plans for all these mining leases have been requested from DPI. However, despite numerous requests DPI has still not provided the supposedly public documents for the mine at Bullarto, so Wombat Forestcare is not holding its breath. DPI appears to bend over backwards for the mining companies but does little or nothing to inform or consult the community and protect the environment.' stated Murray Ralph from Wombat Forestcare.

Contact Murray Ralph on 53485710 for more information.

Further information on each mining lease can also be found on the Wombat Forestcare website at www.wombatforestcare.org.au

Mining and Mineral Exploration Licenses in the Wombat State Forest and surrounds



Mining Licenses in Wombat State Forest that are current or being renewed

<u>Mining Lease</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Development Stage</u>	<u>Area (ha.)</u>	<u>Lease Owner</u>
MIN5503	Basalt, Werona area,	Approved June 2011		2 R. Sanderson, S. Glasson
MIN5383	Basalt, Werona area,	Draft stage	225.68	Brown, Bruce Robert
MIN4230	Basalt, Werona area,	Draft stage	4.4	Sandy Mining Pty Ltd
MIN4305	Spargo Creek area	Draft stage	5	Bullarto Gold Pty Ltd
MIN5349	Bullarto South	Approved June 2012	5	Stuart, Neil F
MIN5395	Dales Creek Area	Approved June 2012	2.57	Gold Search International Pty Ltd
MIN5059	east of Barrys Reef	Authority to commence Dec 98	5	Nuggety Gold Mining Pty Ltd
MIN5111	Dales Creek area	None currently submitted	6	Bullarto Gold Pty Ltd
MIN5518	Dales Creek area	None currently submitted	137.29	Gold Search International Pty Ltd
			392.94	

Mining License Applications in Wombat State Forest

<u>Mining Lease</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Owner</u>	<u>Area (ha.)</u>
MIN5460	Spargo Creek area	Armstrong Constructions	37.4
MIN5549	South of Blackwood	Bullarto Gold Pty Ltd	4
			41.4

Current Mining Licenses on Private Land

<u>Mining Lease</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Development Stage</u>	<u>Area (ha.)</u>	<u>Lease Owner</u>
MIN5485	Bolwarrah area	Approved June 2012	3.6	Daniel Toohey