

THE MINE LAND POST

SPRING 2022

The Mine Land Rehabilitation Authority works with community, industry and government to oversee the rehabilitation planning of declared mine land and ensure transition to safe, stable and sustainable post-mining land uses in Victoria.

A message from the CEO

Welcome to our Spring newsletter and a very brisk start to the spring season it has been! I am very excited to be part of such a great team. It's been a busy few months settling in to my role, with a number of engagement activities held including a very rewarding day spent with GLaWAC and a series of meetings with other stakeholders. As we move into the warmer weather, I look forward to continuing to meet with community, government and industry across the region.

We have continued to work with the "new norm" of being in the office around 3 days per week which makes for a good work environment. We have also welcomed new team members providing us support in the education and administrative areas.

We have a range of upcoming events planned including the release of our video series and the implementation of work on our Monitoring and Evaluation Framework. We will be posting updates and information on our social media platforms.



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Hazelwood Environmental Effects Statement

In February 2022 the Minister for Planning responded to a referral from the operator of the Hazelwood Rehabilitation Project, deciding that an Environmental Effects Statement, or EES, was required to assess the environmental impacts of a full-pit lake. ENGIE has proposed the creation of a lake in order to provide the most safe, stable and sustainable final landform, to be filled to a level +45 m above mean sea-level and potentially integrated with the Morwell River.

The Minister for Planning's decision noted the potential for significant environmental effects asso-

ciated with lake creation – for example on water quality, land uses, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal values, native vegetation and ecology – that require careful assessment, particularly given climate change and variability of weather events. The quality of water within the lake and the potential effects to the connected environments downstream is one of several central questions to be addressed by the EES process. Read further about the referral and Minister's decision [here](#).



Figure 1 Illustration depicting a lake at +45m AHD at the present-day Hazelwood mine site south of Morwell, as proposed by Engie. All mine infrastructure will be removed and the lake margins rehabilitated to integrate with the surrounding terrain

What is an Environmental Effects Statement?

In Victoria, environment assessment of the potential environmental impacts or effects of a proposed development may be required under the Environment Effects Act 1978.

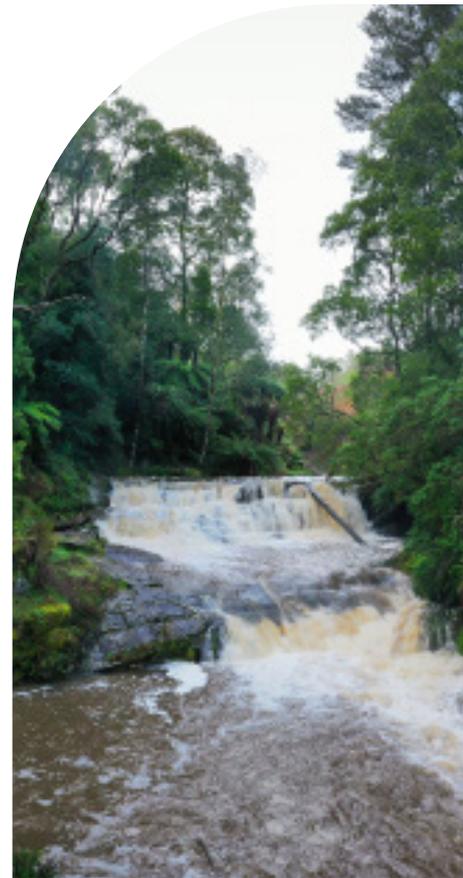
The process under this Act is not an approval process itself, rather it enables statutory decision-makers (Ministers, local government and statutory authorities) to make decisions about whether a project with potentially significant environmental effects should proceed.

Members of the public can also participate in the EES process by providing written comments on the draft scoping requirements and the final EES. If an inquiry is appointed, there may also be an opportunity to make a verbal submission.

The EES process involves multiple phases with input from all stakeholders, including a period for public hearings. The process

involves the proponent, in this case ENGIE, undertaking a scope of technical studies in accordance with criteria set out by the Minister. Typically, the process takes 2 to 3 years to complete and involves initial consultation with a Technical Reference Group prior to a period of public review of the findings. Following consideration of all relevant information, the Minister can conclude that the level of environmental effects for the project are either acceptable or unacceptable, or that additional modifications or investigations might produce acceptable outcomes.

You can read more about the Environmental Effects Statement process [here](#).



Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

The Mine Land Rehabilitation Authority's Monitoring and Evaluation Framework has been published. Thank you to everyone who took part in the consultation and provided feedback.

The aim of the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework is to provide clarity and guidance to key stakeholder groups and the wider community on our role in declared mine rehabilitation planning and outcomes oversight as well as our expectations with respect to the progress and quality of planning and outcomes.

The framework is designed to be implemented during any phase of a declared mine's operational lifecycle, recognising that each of the declared mines are at different phases in these cycles.

The key stakeholders consist of the declared mine licensees (the operators of the three Latrobe Valley brown coal mines), the Latrobe Valley Regional Rehabilitation Strategy development team and public sector bodies (e.g. Earth Resources Regulation and the Environment Protection Authority Victoria).

For each stakeholder group the framework identifies oversight focus areas (including community engagement and research) with each area outlining:

- individual activities where material progress needs to be demonstrated;
- evidence required to demonstrate that progress;
- process-based opportunities where we can verify progress and outputs; and
- our expectations with respect to quality and timing of the activity.

The Monitoring and Evaluation Framework also sets out the arrangements for carrying out strategic audits in relation to the implementation of regional rehabilitation planning activities. We aim to use existing operational arrangements and interactions with and between stakeholder organisations (for example for regulatory reporting), to undertake the required monitoring and evaluation activities, with new processes or reporting to meet the objectives of the framework to be minimised as far as practicable.

The framework will be reviewed 6-monthly along with an implementation plan which we are currently developing.



What we've been up to

In recent months, we have been on the road catching up with a number of groups about mine rehabilitation and transition in the local community.

In March we met spoke with the Victorian Environmental Water Holder Commissioner during their visit to Gippsland, the discussion focussing mainly on water in our region.

In May we spent a day with the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC) learning about community, culture and Country to inform our future work.

In May, we also spoke with the Latrobe Health Assembly about mine rehabilitation and what it means for the future of the local region.

In June, we held our consultation into our Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, including a webinar and open houses at the Latrobe Valley GovHub. This was a chance for people to learn more about the framework and have their say.

August was a busy month. We started with a visit to the Alcoa Anglesea Site to learn about what mine rehabilitation looks like there. Some of our team also headed to the Gippsland New Energy Conference to hear local perspectives on Gippsland's new energy future and transition. We were also at the Federation University Open Day meet-

ing with the community in person at the beautiful Gippsland campus.

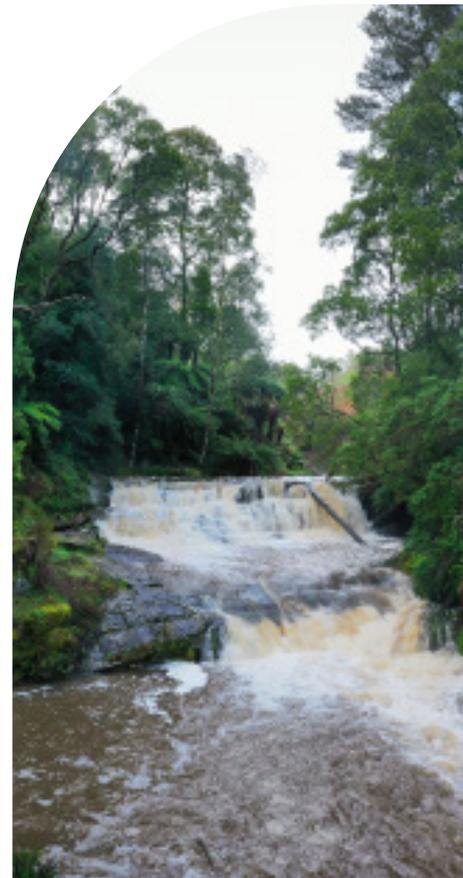
In September, we spoke with the Latrobe Inner Wheel Club, answering lots of questions about where mine rehabilitation fits with energy transition and the future vision for the Latrobe Valley.

We've been speaking with classroom students at Lavalla College about mine rehabilitation, the big picture issues and how it affects people and the environment. Conversations with younger people are so important in our work and it was great to hear these students thinking and talking about what these issues will mean for the future. We will be working more with schools in the coming months.

We've also continued to talk about all things mine rehabilitation on local radio, providing the community with information around key mine rehab issues.

In October, we attended the 15th International Conference on Mine Closure. This was a chance to be part of the conversation about post-mining legacies from a global perspective.

If you'd like us to come and talk to your community group or school, contact us on 1800 571 966 or contactus@mineland.vic.gov.au.



Meet our team

Meet Jenny our CEO

I'm really appreciating the opportunity to work in this beautiful part of the world. When I'm not at work you can find me enjoying time with the family – including our troop of pets, hunkering down to watch some good TV or reading a book!



Meet Antonia our Technical Director

An immigrant from the UK, been in Australia for 11 years now, with the last 4 in the Latrobe Valley and Warragul. I have 18 years in the geo-environmental industry, with the last 11 focused on mine closure planning for Government, Consultancy and Industry. I am looking forward being part of creating positive rehabilitation outcomes for the Latrobe Valley. In my spare time you will find me with my son, at the beach or off with friends.



Meet Andrew our Education Officer

At university I studied Arts and Science before moving onto Education and I have spent the last 20 years teaching in both Primary and Secondary schools. I am a keen SCUBA diver and I love to travel to see the underwater sights. I also enjoy photography, writing and good coffee. I guess I just love seeing the world around us, soaking it in and watching how it all fits together and works. I'm very excited to be at the MLRA; a new chapter, different challenges and a fresh focus.



Meet Bimal our Finance and Accounts Officer

I hold a Bachelor of Commerce degree which I have used in a wide range of accounting roles over the years in my family business and other roles. I am a nature lover and follow naturopathy and yoga. At this stage of my life, I want to be involved in work that allows me follow my heart and interests. I am keen to get involved in activities that are focused on the betterment of mankind and our planet. I am constantly seeking learning opportunities in order to better myself.



Keeping in touch

Our busy schedule this year meant we had to hit pause on the release of this newsletter. We hope it was worth the wait and that you have continued to follow our news on social media.

We're considering a new approach in future, so watch this space. As always, thoughts and feedback about our newsletters is invited. Contact us on 1800 571 966 or contactus@mineland.vic.gov.au .