

Submission to the Inquiry into Unconventional Gas in Victoria July 2015.

### **Submission Content.**

UCG extraction presents too great a risk to Gippsland. We don't believe that it can be done safely, or that it will provide any benefit. These concerns are based on-

### **Risks/Regulatory Safeguards**

We have seen first hand in Latrobe Valley how mining companies operate and how the Victorian State governments (DPI, EPA et al) turn a blind eye. It's a very cosy relationship. Whether it's a fire or a freeway collapse at Hazelwood, or a flood or mine wall collapse at Yallourn, it's always the same outcome. Non-compliance is never detected or acted on, then there's an accident, then the lies and cover ups, then a report tabled in Parliament –always accepted but then ignored, and then the floods or fires start again. In the 2013 Victorian state budget \$3 million of taxpayer funds were given to Yallourn for 'rehabilitation and remedial works' after one of the floods, and now we have GDF Suez refusing to pay an \$18 million bill to the CFA. If that's best practice, it needs to improve considerably.

### **Regional Development/Jobs.**

UCG exploration and extraction won't create local jobs. 95% of the jobs will go to non-locals, as we saw with the Desalination plant and the Bald Hills windfarm. In both instances pleas from local workers and contractors fell on deaf ears in Spring Street. Both Thiess and Mitsui declined to liaise with local employment agencies etc. Many of the UCG jobs will be FIFO, and/or s457 visa, and the working conditions may be covered by a greenfields EBA, with lesser conditions than the usual EBA's. Construction of new houses for permanent and holidaying residents provides much work for local builders and contractors. We doubt that this will continue if UCG is extracted. We are also concerned that the new Trans Pacific Partnership trade agreement will have an impact on jobs, particularly if there is foreign investment in UCG from China. If the Victorian state government really believes that UCG will create economic opportunities for workers and contractors in Gippsland, please consider providing us with information on exactly how many jobs and contracts are available.

### **Economic Development**

Royalties – no mention of any, and at 2 previous state government UCG forums, no one could provide an answer. Will royalties be paid, and if so, how much has been allocated for economic development in Gippsland? Economic development musn't be confused with 'rehabilitation and remedial works' or the costs of cleaning up after an accident. Gippsland currently attracts much foreign investment in dairy & beef farming and agricultural produce. We are told that this multi-million dollar investment in Gippsland

is Victoria's very own 'mining boom'. Gippsland's farms are attractive to foreign investors because of the pristine and unspoilt environment.

The RACV invested millions in a 5 star resort at Inverloch, which created many full time construction jobs and many permanent ongoing hospitality jobs. If UCG mining proceeds, we will be robbed of future economic opportunities and development- who would want to invest millions in a UCG zone?

So why risk it?

The Victorian state government has a duty of care to the people and businesses in Gippsland. We'd like you to exercise that duty of care, wisely, when making a final decision that will impact heavily upon us.

We don't ever want to see, hear or smell UCG in Gippsland- we love it the way it is, and that's why we live, work and holiday here.

I am available to attend a public hearing if required.

Yours sincerely,

Julie Tyrrell

Concerned Citizen