

MEDIA RELEASE



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VEAC RUNNING SCARED OF COUNTRY PEOPLE

The Victorian Environment Assessment Council (VEAC) demonstrated last night in Shepparton that they do not understand country people as they ran to police and used them as their mouth piece rather than face more than 80 country people who simply wanted to be heard, said Timber Communities Australia (TCA)

“This is an absolute disgrace’ said Mr Scott Gentle, Victorian State Manager for the grassroots organization, Timber Communities Australia.

“VEAC councilors publicly stated they would meet with any groups to discuss their concerns, however when faced by 80 people with like mind beliefs from a range of groups representing the community they refused outright to meet with them”, said Mr Gentle.

The assembled crowd was told that the councilors would only meet a maximum of 5 people at a time leaving people standing outside in the cold for well over an hour.

“VEAC didn’t even have the courtesy to inform those waiting themselves and requested police to inform the crowd of their decision. What happened to open and transparent consultation as promised by VEAC since the Redgum review started?” asked Mr Gentle.

“VEAC’s cloak and dagger style consultation is an insult to country people and leaves us wondering what they are trying to hide”, said Mr Gentle

The VEAC recommendations released in July could be the death knell for many of the Communities in the Redgum study area. If accepted by Government these recommendations will see almost 90% of the forest locked up and nearly all of those that use the bush impacted in a negative way.

VEAC states in its report that the benefits of the proposed recommendations would be for people in Melbourne and the costs would have to be borne by the people that live in the Redgum area

“If you live in the Redgum area and think these recommendations won’t affect you think again” said Mr. Gentle. “

“TCA urges people not to sit back and let these recommendations go unchallenged. Voice your disapproval and let the VEAC councilors know that they can’t treat country families with contempt. Don’t let them destroy your lifestyle and livelihood” concluded Mr. Gentle

For further information call:

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Pictures below



More than 80 people turned out to speak to VEAC only to be turned away and treated like 2nd class citizens.



Tracee Spiby from the TCA Rushworth Branch has felt 1st hand what it is like to be treated poorly by VEAC and came to Shepparton to lend support to the Redgum people.