

# MINERALS EXPLORATION IN WESTERN VICTORIA

Information for Communities



## Discovering western Victoria's minerals

New scientific research indicates there is potential for discoveries of copper, other base metals and gold to be made in western Victoria.

Exploration for minerals can add a new dimension to regional economies and readily co-exists with agriculture and tourism.

The Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (DEDJTR) has released ground for minerals exploration in a region known geologically as the Stavely Arc (see map).

We are improving what is expected of minerals explorers, to ensure they work closely with landholders and local communities.

We are holding information sessions in towns across the Stavely Arc to help local communities understand more about potential minerals exploration. DEDJTR staff will be on hand to answer questions, provide more information about the ground release, how minerals exploration is regulated and the geology of the region. Details of these sessions are available at [earthresources.vic.gov.au/stavely](http://earthresources.vic.gov.au/stavely)

## Thriving regional communities

The Victorian Government is committed to creating greater prosperity and a better quality of life for regional communities. Supporting new investment helps provide more opportunities for regional communities to grow and thrive.

Encouraging exploration for minerals in suitable areas can boost economic activity in Victoria's small towns and regional communities.

Businesses can benefit from increased spending on local services and products such as accommodation, food, fuel and equipment, with flow on benefits throughout regional communities.



## Key facts about minerals exploration in the Stavely Arc

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Minerals explorers need to obtain a minerals exploration licence and negotiate access to any privately owned land they want to explore on

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Exploration for coal or gas will not be permitted

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Minerals exploration is not allowed by law in National Parks, State Parks and wilderness areas

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Minerals exploration licences will only be awarded to experienced, responsible explorers with a strong commitment to work closely with landholders and local communities

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Support tools are available to help landholders and their advisors in engaging with minerals explorers, particularly around land access

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On average, less than 1 per cent of minerals exploration projects lead to mining

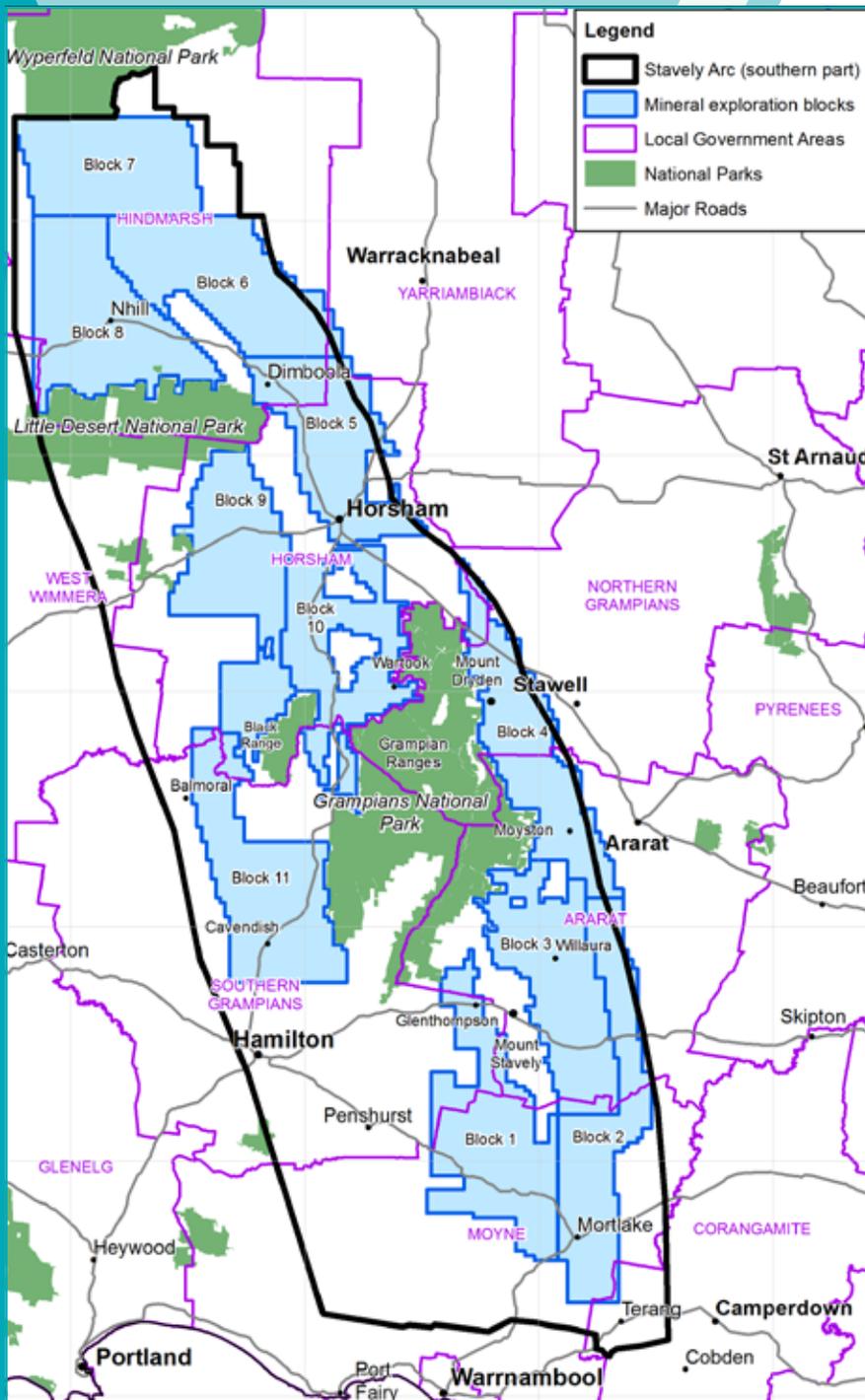
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### Benefits for regional communities

In releasing new ground for minerals exploration, our aim is to attract new investment to the region by responsible minerals explorers.

We are working with local communities to understand what is important to them, and to help communities and landholders feel more confident in how minerals exploration works, and how exploration activities are regulated.

This approach will ensure that minerals exploration is undertaken responsibly for the benefit of regional communities.



## Supporting local communities

Socially responsible and sustainable development of Victoria's natural resources is important for regional communities

Our new approach will allow landholders and local communities to have more opportunities to engage, learn and participate, both before and during the minerals exploration process.

In a first for Victoria, minerals exploration companies will compete to secure exclusive rights to explore for minerals in one or more specific areas within the Stavelly Arc. A range of criteria will be used to select minerals explorers including their:

- plans and capability to work with landholders and communities,
- technical competence, and
- financial viability.

In lodging an application to explore for minerals, companies will be required to describe their proposed approach to engage landholders and local communities. They will need to provide detailed engagement plans for the duration of a minerals exploration licence (five years). Companies will need to demonstrate their commitment to working closely with landholders and communities throughout their exploration projects.

Companies not able to demonstrate a commitment to build ongoing, inclusive relationships with landholders and local communities will not be awarded a minerals exploration licence.

The Stavelly Arc is a geological region located in western Victoria.

The Stavelly Ground Release makes available 11 areas (blocks) within the Stavelly Arc for minerals exploration.

## Landholder rights

Under the law, a company holding a minerals exploration licence can enter and explore for specified minerals on private property, if it has either the informed consent, or a written registered compensation agreement with the landholder.

A written agreement can include information about the specific nature, duration and potential impacts of proposed minerals exploration activities; access requirements (eg on-farm biosecurity procedures); and compensation. Compensation can be in cash or delivered in kind.

### More assistance and support for landholders will be available

We want to ensure that landholders feel well prepared and confident when discussing potential land access arrangements with minerals explorers.

As part of the Stavely Ground Release, DEDJTR is providing additional assistance and support to landholders in the Stavely Arc region.

Support and assistance will include:

- workshops and information sessions for landholders in regional centres to help them understand the land access process;
- a land access and compensation agreement template and guidance material to support land access negotiations;
- professional development and training for advisors in the Stavely Arc region to improve local legal capability around the land access process.

DEDJTR is also developing a new dispute resolution service that focuses on providing early support to assist with resolving any disputes between minerals explorers and landholders.





## FURTHER INFORMATION

Website: [earthresources.vic.gov.au/stavely](http://earthresources.vic.gov.au/stavely)

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