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Guy Barnett, Minister for Resources

Green Groups a Threat to Tasmanian Mining

Thousands of jobs could be lost in Tasmania's mining and forest industries in the event of another Labor-Green minority government.

Today, in speaking at the annual conference of the Tasmanian Minerals and Energy Council, I made very clear that the Hodgman Liberal Government remains the strongest and most consistent supporter of our mining industry.

We have an industry that is very well regulated, with companies that are extremely conscious of their responsibilities and of the need to protect the environment.

But we have from groups like the Bob Brown Foundation, Save the Tarkine and the Wilderness Society a persistent campaign to lock away more and more of Tasmania.

The push to lock away another 680,000 hectares of North-West Tasmania in an extension to our World Heritage Area would be devastating for resource industries.

Advice from the Department of State Growth shows this land grab would:

- Ban mining in one of our most prospective mining regions, which includes more than 1000 known mineral deposits;
- Include at least eight current mining leases;
- Based on past expenditure, cost the State upwards of \$150 million in mining and exploration investment over 20 years;
- Lock up more than 12,000 hectares of the Permanent Timber Production Zone and 91,000 hectares of our Wood Bank – the Future Potential Production Forest;
- Cost a further \$250 million in the value of native forest harvesting over the next 20 years; and

- Add to the sovereign risk issues that have seriously impeded investment in Tasmania for decades.

This year, Wilderness Society activists went to Poland to tell the World Heritage Committee that these areas are “Tasmania’s World Heritage in Waiting”.

The Greens and their various groups do not speak for Tasmanians; they certainly do not speak for those Tasmanians who value jobs in our productive industries, like mining and forestry.

But there is a danger that these extremists will gain political power if Labor does another deal with the Greens in a minority government.

And we know what happened last time to our forest industry.

We must continue to fight for the very existence of the mining industry, and the many jobs it provides for Tasmanians.