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# GANDERS REEF

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## Location

OFF GROWLERS CREEK ROAD WANDILIGONG, ALPINE SHIRE

## Municipality

ALPINE SHIRE

## Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

## Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H8224-0057

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO82

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - July 11, 2005

The Growlers Creek Gold Bucket Dredge Site consists of a largely buried timber pontoon. The skeletal remains of the pontoon is very overgrown by trees, ferns and blackberries, but appears to measure approximately 25 metres x 10 metres

The Growlers Creek Dredge was built in 1924. The dredge worked from 1924-30, after which it was stripped and parts used in the construction of the Freeburgh dredge.

The Growlers Creek Gold Bucket Dredge Site is of historical, archaeological and scientific importance to the State of Victoria.

The Growlers Creek Gold Bucket Dredge Site is historically and scientifically important as a characteristic and well preserved example of a form of gold mining used in Victoria from the early 1900s. Bucket dredges were introduced into Victoria from New Zealand and were widely used until the 1950s. A bucket dredge comprised a floating pontoon on which an endless chain of iron buckets revolved around a long frame or ladder which could be raised or lowered. The bucket line excavated all the material to a depth to be dredged. Bucket dredging sites are now rare in the State, and surviving sites are important key ingredients in an understanding of the development of alluvial gold mining technology.

The Growlers Creek Gold Bucket Dredge Site is archaeologically important for its potential to yield artefacts and evidence which will be able to provide significant information about the technological history of gold mining.

[Source: Victorian Heritage Register.]

SiteCard data copied on 04/07/2024:

## What is significant?

The site has poor archaeological value due to extensive bulldozing and no archaeological features such as machinery or building sites.

## How is it significant?

The site has poor intactness, integrity and condition.

## Why is it significant?

The site has poor archaeological value due to extensive bulldozing and no archaeological features such as machinery or building sites.

Interpretation of Site	The Ganders Reef Mine Site shows a large, high, partly-quarried mullock dump and a filled, subsidising shaft, on the north side of Growlers Creek. The whole site is overgrown with ferns and blackberry. The site shows evidence of extensive bulldozing. No archaeological features such as machinery or building sites were located.
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Hermes Number	10908
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Property Number	
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## History

Heritage Inventory History of Site:

Gander's (sometimes known as the Specimen) was among the first reefs opened up on the Upper Ovens

goldfield, in 1859. In early 1860 it was one of just a handful of reefs from which stone had been crushed, and was among the richest. The Gander's Reef Co. was working by shaft and tunnel, close to the creek. They crushed at Gitchell's battery on Morse's Creek and installed a pump and engine for draining their shaft in 1861. Yields fell off during that year, making the reef unpayable. Attention briefly shifted to the northern portion of the claim. Gander's Reef was again worked in 1867-8, although not very profitably.

In 1886, a diamond drill struck gold at depth on the Gander's line. The Diamond Drill Co. was formed to work it, with a capital of £10,000. A new shaft was sunk, pumping and winding plant installed, and an office and blacksmith's shop erected. Hopes of a quartz mining revival for the whole district hinged on the Diamond Drill Co.'s success. But when the reef was reached, through sinking and driving, in mid-1888, it was found to be barren of gold. Local shareholders urged an investigation 'to ascertain how a golden core was drawn from a reef that otherwise carries not a trace of the colour of gold.' The Diamond Drill Co. immediately stopped work and removed its plant, despite local opinion that, with perseverance, gold-bearing stone would certainly be struck within 50 or 60 ft. After the Gander's Reef failure, the local mining scene sank even deeper into its slump. SiteCard data copied on 04/07/2024: Ganders Reef was discovered in late 1859 and early crushings went 5 ounces of gold per ton. It was worked from a 240 feet deep shaft to 50 feet below creek level and was abandoned in 1862. It was re-opened in 1867 and was worked intermittently from 1868-72. Total recorded production was 1266 ounces of gold. In 1886 a diamond drill was brought in to test the reef at depth and reported cutting two payable quartz reefs. A company was formed to work the reefs but failed to find anything after sinking a 200 feet deep shaft (Drill Shaft in Figure 2 in attachment).

*This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.*

*For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>*