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Wilson's Promontory Marine National Park

Wilson's Promontory Marine Park



Management Plan May 2006

**WILSONS PROMONTORY MARINE NATIONAL PARK
AND
WILSONS PROMONTORY MARINE PARK
MANAGEMENT PLAN**



May 2006

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Acknowledgement of *Country*. In their rich culture, Indigenous Australians are intrinsically connected to the continent – including the area now known as Victoria. Parks Victoria recognises that the park is part of *Country* of the Traditional Owners.

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Note: Technical terms used in this plan are explained in the **Glossary** at the end of the plan

Disclaimers

This plan is prepared without prejudice to any negotiations or litigated outcome of any native title determination applications covering land or water within the plan's area. It is acknowledged that any future outcomes of native title determination applications may necessitate amendment of this plan; and the implementation of this plan may require further notifications under the procedures in Division 3 of Part 2 of the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cwlth).

The plan is also prepared without prejudice to any future negotiated outcomes between the Government/s and Victorian Indigenous communities. It is acknowledged that such negotiated outcomes may necessitate amendment of this plan.

Every effort has been made to ensure that the information in this plan is accurate. Parks Victoria does not guarantee that the publication is without flaw of any kind and therefore disclaims all liability for any error, loss or other consequence, which may arise from you relying on any information in the publication.

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FOREWORD

Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park, Marine Park and Marine Reserve make significant contributions to Victoria's system of Marine National Parks and other marine protected areas. At 15 500 ha in area, Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park is Victoria's southernmost and largest Marine National Park.

The planning area contains biological communities with distinct biogeographic patterns, including shallow subtidal reefs, deep subtidal reefs, intertidal rocky shores, sandy beaches, seagrass, subtidal soft substrates and expansive areas of open water. Sixty-eight species of marine flora and fauna are believed to be at their eastern or western distributional limits within the planning area.

The planning area also provides important habitat for several threatened shorebird species, including species listed under international migratory bird agreements. Furthermore, Kanowna Island is an important breeding site for a significant colony of over 9000 Australian Fur Seals.

The planning area has long been part of the sacred *Country* of Yiruk for the Gunai / Kurnai Indigenous people and Wamoom for the Boonwurrung Indigenous people. Seascapes of the park and the surrounding waters and landscapes of Wilsons Promontory are traditionally and culturally significant to relevant Indigenous communities.

The history of the planning area since European settlement is also rich in diversity, involving maritime exploration, commercial exploitation, coastal trading and navigation. Evidence of many of these activities is present today in the form of documented history, historic shipwrecks and other maritime infrastructure.

Today the planning area offers exceptional opportunities for diving, snorkelling, swimming, boating and birdwatching in a remote and natural setting, attracting visitors from throughout the state and elsewhere. It forms an integral component of the Gippsland tourism industry.

Implementation of this Approved Plan will help protect and conserve the planning area's natural and cultural values, help make the planning area more widely known and appreciated, and ensure visitors enjoy it and respect its importance for both current and future generations.

The Government recognises the value and importance of raising community and agency participation to achieve integrated management of the coastal zone. In doing so, I welcome collaborative initiatives to management of the planning area, particularly with Indigenous communities, local community groups and individuals, and key government agencies.

I am pleased to take the opportunity to thank those many individuals and organisations who contributed to this plan by responding to requests for information or views. In particular, I thank representatives of the South Gippsland Marine Protected Area Management Plan Advisory Group for their valuable contribution to the development of the plan. I also wish to thank those individuals, groups and organisations who made submissions on the Draft Plan and I look forward to the community's ongoing support for the management of Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park, Marine Park and Marine Reserve.

JOHN THWAITES MP
Minister for Environment

APPROVED MANAGEMENT PLAN

This Management Plan has been prepared under section 17D of the *National Parks Act 1975* (Vic.) and is approved for implementation.

The plan provides the basis for the future management of Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park, Wilsons Promontory Marine Park and Wilsons Promontory Marine Reserve. It was finalised following consideration of the 19 submissions received on the Draft Management Plan.

PROF LYNDSEY NEILSON
Secretary to the
Department of Sustainability and Environment

MARK STONE
Chief Executive
Parks Victoria

INTRODUCTION TO THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT

Victorians are custodians of some of the most remarkable, diverse and culturally important marine environments on Earth. These include deep open water, shallow embayments, rocky reefs, canyons, seagrass meadows, tidal sandflats and mudflats, and estuaries, and they support more than 12 000 known species. Around 90% of these marine species are found only in the waters of southern Australia.

Broadly speaking, Victoria has responsibility for the waters which extend off-shore to three nautical miles and cover around 70 000 square kilometres. Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries make up about 5% of this area, but protect a range of significant species and important habitats, as well as maritime artefacts and evidence of past Indigenous occupation and use.

The vast three-dimensional marine environment has characteristics that are very different from those of the land and atmosphere. The fundamental physical properties — pressure, temperature, salinity, density and availability of nutrients and gases — are all very different. There are also great differences in the types of substrates, and the physical and biological processes that occur, such as tides, currents, light penetration, erosion, sedimentation, oxygen uptake, life cycles and even the food chains.

The organisms that occupy the marine environment are different as well. On land vascular plants dominate, but in marine habitats they are very rare, occurring only in very shallow water on sheltered coastlines. In most marine environments their ecological roles in photosynthesis and oxygen production are undertaken by algae, which range in size from giant kelps to minute single-celled species. Other single-celled organisms such as diatoms, cyanobacteria, dinoflagellates and forams, together with invertebrate larvae and marine fungi, make up most of the abundant marine plankton that is the basis of all marine food chains.

As on land, invertebrates, including molluscs (e.g. octopuses, abalones, snails), crustaceans (e.g. crabs, lobsters, tiny amphipods) and echinoderms (e.g. sea cucumbers, sea stars and sea urchins), dominate the marine fauna but

insects — the most abundant invertebrates on land — are almost absent. The dominant vertebrates are fish, although mammals and reptiles also inhabit the marine environment and many birds inhabit both realms.

Although they are very different physically and biologically, the land, atmosphere and marine environments are interconnected. Water and gases are transferred between oceans and the atmosphere. There are animals with both marine and freshwater life stages, and some species breed in estuaries where fresh water from the land mixes with oceanic salt water. Fresh water and sediments from catchments far inland are dispersed into coastal waters, bringing with them nutrients needed to maintain inshore marine ecosystems but also pollution from human activities.

The sea interconnects marine habitats over great distances. Tides and currents move sediments, plankton and organic matter into and through habitats, along with flotsam, jetsam, ballast water and oils released from ships on the open seas, or washed from the shores of other countries. And many marine animals migrate long distances, passing freely into and out of Victorian waters and spending much of their lives in the open ocean.

A vision for Victoria's system of Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries

‘A world-class system of Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries that conserves the diversity of Victoria's marine environments, protected and enjoyed by Victorians and visitors, forever.’

This vision for Victoria's system of Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries is detailed in the *Marine National Park and Marine Sanctuaries Management Strategy 2003–2010* (Parks Victoria 2003a). It is described in the following extract:

‘The vision for Victoria's system of Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries is to maintain marine ecosystems in their natural state, enjoyed by visitors and protected from the effects of inappropriate activities. The system will safeguard representative examples of undisturbed natural marine habitats, respect cultural heritage values, and be a place of

inspiration, enjoyment and renewal for all people. The system will complement our world-class national parks system on land.

This vision aims to preserve the diversity of our marine environment, its flora and fauna, its natural beauty, and the diversity of activities that may be enjoyed there. It is a vision that invites all Victorians to become involved, to take pride in our Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries, and to share in their stewardship.'

Contribution to the statewide system

As Victoria's largest Marine National Park, Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park makes a vital contribution to Victoria's system of Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries. It lies within Victoria's southernmost marine waters, and is the only Marine National Park in Victoria that is within the Flinders Bioregion.

Wilsons Promontory Marine Park and Wilsons Promontory Marine Reserve complement this system and protect other important values in the planning area.

Implications for management

The differences and connections in the marine environment mean that Victoria's Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries must be managed somewhat differently from land environments. Natural, recreational and cultural values may be affected by the use of both land and marine areas some distance away, over which park managers have no

direct control. Impacts on one marine habitat can quickly affect another and human activities and natural events on land and in the atmosphere can have widespread consequences for the marine environment. Boundaries in the ocean can be difficult to define, and the effects of human activities can be hidden from view. Like the atmosphere but in contrast to land, the marine environment is a common resource which is rarely in private ownership, and there are few natural or artificial barriers to movement. Many of the strategies used to concentrate the impacts of recreational activities in terrestrial parks (e.g. the creation of walking tracks and picnic areas) are not feasible in the marine context.

Conserving historic and cultural places and objects is also a challenge because it is difficult to identify an underwater place or monitor activities that take place on the open sea or under water. *Sea Country* and cultural association with, or past use of, underwater Indigenous places which were exposed before the sea level rose, must also be considered.

The long-term protection of the Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries relies on the support and goodwill of the community, together with the help of coastal managers and government agencies. The plan seeks to foster a strong sense of custodianship of the planning area and to strengthen its protection while respecting cultural and community associations with the area.

SUMMARY

Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park is the largest of Victoria's 13 marine national parks, and lies within Victoria's southernmost marine waters. The marine flora and fauna of this Marine National Park is abundant and diverse, and includes more than 65 species believed to be at their eastern or western distributional limits (Plummer et al. 2003).

Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park, the adjacent marine park and marine reserve, together comprising the planning area, are the only Victorian representatives of marine protected areas in the Flinders bioregion, and therefore make an important contribution to the statewide system and the National Representative System of Marine Protected Areas.

Indigenous tradition indicates that the planning area is part of the sacred *Country* of Yiruk for the Gunai / Kurnai people, and Wamoom for the Boonwurrung people¹, who are traditionally and culturally associated with the planning area. Indigenous tradition also indicates that the planning area contains many Indigenous places and objects that are integral to the dreaming and culture of the Traditional Owners, and are highly significant to Indigenous people. At the time of publication there were several groups asserting traditional ownership of the area.

The history of the planning area since European settlement is also rich in diversity, involving maritime exploration, commercial exploitation, coastal trading and navigation. Evidence of many of these activities is present today in the form of documented history, historic shipwrecks and other maritime infrastructure.

¹ This management plan adopts the spellings used by the Native Title Unit, Department of Justice. There are a number of alternative spellings and pronunciations. For the Gunai / Kurnai these include: 'Ganai', 'Gun-na', 'Kanny', 'Kani', 'Knai' and 'Kannai'. Boonwurrung is a known form of the name for this Aboriginal tribal group. Boonwurrung may also be spelt in a number of different ways, including 'Boonerwung' and 'Bunurong'.

The planning area contains some of Victoria's most magnificent underwater seascapes in numerous diving sites, featuring near-vertical granite 'drop-offs' and frequently clear water. It offers exceptional opportunities for diving, snorkelling, swimming, boating and birdwatching in a remote and natural setting, attracting visitors from throughout the state and elsewhere. The planning area is readily accessible from Melbourne and is an integral component of the Gippsland tourism industry.

Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park, Marine Park and Marine Reserve will be managed as world-class marine protected areas for conservation and appropriate recreation, in accordance with their status. They will contribute to the overall maintenance of marine biodiversity in the Flinders bioregion, protecting a range of marine ecological communities and marine flora and fauna, including threatened marine mammals and shorebirds.

Enabling natural processes to occur unimpeded will be an important management goal, as will improving partnerships with Friends and other volunteers, community groups, Indigenous communities and other government agencies. Future management of the planning area will be integrated with that of the adjoining terrestrial areas of Wilsons Promontory National Park.

Significant management directions for the planning area are as follows:

- Natural processes, including competition, predation, recruitment and disturbance, will be protected to ensure an overall benefit to the biodiversity and variety of marine ecological communities in the planning area.
- Identified threats to the natural and cultural values of the planning area will be minimised through addressing the outcomes of ongoing monitoring, risk assessment and, where feasible, complementary adjacent, coastal and catchment management.
- Research and monitoring will be undertaken to improve the scientific basis for management, including baseline data

- collection, marine habitat mapping and threat assessment.
- The Traditional Owners' cultural lore, interests and rights in the planning area, and aspirations for *Country*, will be reflected in the planning area's management, in accordance with legislation and policies.
- Indigenous places and objects will be protected in partnership with the Traditional Owners.
- Maritime and other cultural heritage from the post-settlement period, including places and shipwrecks, will be protected as far as practicable from damaging natural processes and inappropriate recreational activities.
- Visitor safety, understanding and appreciation of the planning area's natural and cultural values will be enhanced by the production of an integrated three-year rolling information, interpretation and education plan for the planning area and adjoining Wilsons Promontory National Park.
- Visitors will be encouraged to adopt minimal-impact techniques and to adhere to industry-developed standards appropriate to their activity.
- Strong collaborative relationships will be developed with the Traditional Owners to facilitate the reflection of their cultural lore, rights, and interests and aspirations, in the park's planning and management.
- Community and interest groups, including relevant Indigenous communities, will be encouraged and supported to become actively involved in areas of park management that relate to their interests.
- Impacts of illegal harvesting will be minimised through information, interpretation and education, and improved surveillance and enforcement.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and planning area

The planning area is at the southern tip of the Australian mainland, approximately 220 kilometres southeast of Melbourne (figure 1), and covers a total area of 22 075 hectares of Crown land and waters.

The planning area comprises:

- Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park (15 500 ha)
- Wilsons Promontory Marine Park (5390 ha)
- Wilsons Promontory Marine Reserve (1185 ha).

Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park extends along the mean high water mark of the coastline from the southern end of Norman Bay to Cape Wellington, and offshore to within 300 m of the Glennie Group of islands, which is the boundary of Wilsons Promontory Marine Reserve (figure 2). The Marine National Park surrounds the Anser Group of islands (part of Wilsons Promontory National Park) to the mean high water mark and extends to 200 m below the seabed. The Marine National Park also adjoins Wilsons Promontory Marine Park (figure 2).

Wilsons Promontory Marine Park consists of two areas. The first extends from Shallow Inlet out to Shellback Island and from there landwards to Norman Bay in the west, ending at the boundary of the Marine National Park. The landward boundary is the mean low water mark. The second area extends 300 m seawards from the low water mark between Refuge Cove and Entrance Point in the east (figure 2). The marine park also surrounds Norman Island and Rabbit Island from the mean low water mark to 300 m offshore. These islands form part of Wilsons Promontory National Park to the mean low water mark. The marine park extends vertically from the water surface to the centre of the Earth.

Wilsons Promontory Marine Reserve consists of three sections. One section of approximately 90 ha lies at the southern end of Norman Bay in the west, and another extends from Cape Wellington to the southern part of Refuge

Cove in the east (figure 2). Both these areas are bounded by the coastline and extend seawards 300 m from the mean low water mark. The marine reserve also surrounds all islands in the Glennie Group, from the mean low water mark out to 300 m offshore. These islands form part of Wilsons Promontory National Park to the mean low water mark. Wilsons Promontory Marine Reserve also extends vertically from the water surface to the centre of the Earth.

As the landward boundaries of the marine park and marine reserve are the mean low water mark, all adjoining intertidal areas are part of Wilsons Promontory National Park and are managed in accordance with the *Wilsons Promontory National Park Management Plan* (Parks Victoria 2002a). Conversely, the boundary of Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park extends to the mean high water mark, so intertidal areas within that park are covered by this management plan.

For the purposes of this plan, Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park, Wilsons Promontory Marine Park and Wilsons Promontory Marine Reserve are collectively called 'the planning area'.

1.2 Creation of the parks and reserve

Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park

Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park forms part of the system of 13 Marine National Parks and 11 Marine Sanctuaries in Victorian waters. Selection of these areas was based on more than 10 years of research, investigation and community consultation by the former Land Conservation Council (LCC) and Environment Conservation Council (ECC), summarised in the *Marine, Coastal and Estuarine Investigation Final Report* (ECC 2000). The recommendations of the ECC accepted by government (Government of Victoria 2002) included establishment of the new Marine National Park under the *National Parks Act 1975* (Vic.). Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park was included in Schedule 7 of the National Parks Act on 16 November 2002 (appendix 1).

When created, much stronger penalties were applied for all forms of fishing, including shellfish collection, in Marine National Parks or Marine Sanctuaries, than apply for taking or damaging fauna, plants or objects from these areas.

Wilson's Promontory Marine National Park includes areas between the high and low water mark that were formerly part of Wilson's Promontory National Park or Wilson's Promontory Marine Reserve.

Wilson's Promontory Marine Park and Wilson's Promontory Marine Reserve

On 26 March 1986 the Government, by Order of the Governor-in-Council, temporarily reserved Wilson's Promontory Marine Park and Wilson's Promontory Marine Reserve under the *Crown Lands (Reserves) Act 1978* (Vic.).

Wilson's Promontory Marine Park was temporarily reserved 'for the conservation of areas of natural interest or beauty or of scientific, historic or archaeological interest and areas for public recreation'. Wilson's Promontory Marine Reserve was temporarily reserved 'for the conservation of areas of natural interest or beauty or of scientific, historic or archaeological interest'. The park and reserve were added to Schedule 4 of the National Parks Act on 23 April 1986.

The proclamation of Wilson's Promontory Marine National Park revoked all of Wilson's Promontory Marine Reserve except for the coastline of the Glennie Group of Islands, a small area in the southern end of Norman Bay, and the eastern coastline of the planning area from Cape Wellington to the southern part of Refuge Cove (section 1.1 and figure 2). Technically the marine reserve remains below 200 metres beneath the seabed of the Marine National Park, although this has negligible practical implications.

1.3 Plan development

A Proposed Management Plan (DCE 1991) was prepared for Wilson's Promontory Marine Park and Marine Reserve, but was not finalised as the ECC's Marine, Coastal and Estuarine Investigation had commenced during the development of the plan (ECC 2000). Relevant proposals from the Proposed Management Plan have been revised in the light of the Government's acceptance of the ECC

recommendations (Government of Victoria 2002) and the proclamation of Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries, and were incorporated into the Draft Plan.

This Management Plan for Wilson's Promontory Marine National Park, Marine Park and Marine Reserve was prepared by Parks Victoria, with significant input from the South Gippsland Marine Protected Area Management Plan Advisory Group and other stakeholders. It takes into account existing information, reports and research findings that relate to the park. The plan is informed and supported by a range of best practice management systems.

The strategies outlined in this plan have been guided by the statewide *Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries Management Strategy 2003–2010* (Parks Victoria 2003a).

The plan is a strategic guide for future management of the planning area. As a public document, the plan establishes how Parks Victoria will protect the natural and cultural values of the park, and describes the services and facilities that will be provided to help visitors to enjoy, appreciate and understand the park in ways that are consistent with this. The plan also serves to inform and encourage cooperative land management and participation in community-based programs between Parks Victoria and the managers of areas adjacent to the planning area.

As a working document for the planning area, the plan informs Parks Victoria's development of Corporate Plans, serves as a framework for subsequent detailed planning and governs management activities.

The Draft Plan was published for public comment in 2004, and 19 submissions were received (appendix 2).

Where necessary, further consultation with the community and stakeholders was undertaken. Key changes made to the draft in preparing this final management plan included:

- refined and more detailed background text to assist in understanding of management strategies
- greater clarification of the area contained within the Special Protection Area

- addition of a provision to allow Licensed Tour Operators to access Kanowna Island closer than 200 m during the Australian Fur Seal breeding season, subject to the demonstration of their conduct in relation to the environmental protection of the Australian Fur Seal colony, and the provision of an appropriate and quality interpretive experience to tour participants (sections 3.1, 4.4, 6.3 and 6.7)
- enhanced and more defined management strategies
- the prohibition of spear fishing competitions in Wilsons Promontory Marine Park and Marine Reserve
- strategies to address increasing issues associated with low-flying aircraft (section 6.8)
- further refinements in differentiating between, and integrating the management of, the planning area and adjoining areas of Wilsons Promontory National Park
- permitting Defence Force activities
- greater detail about plan implementation, reporting, performance measuring and evaluation at the end of the plan
- clarification of the role of Parks Victoria and other government agencies.

This Final Management Plan will direct future management of the planning area until reviewed.

2.1 Regional context

Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park forms part of a representative system of 12 other Marine National Parks and 11 Marine Sanctuaries in Victoria, established within the broader context of a National Representative System of Marine Protected Areas (NRSMPA). Wilsons Promontory Marine Park and Marine Reserve complement this system. The NRSMPA contributes to the establishment of a global representative system of marine protected areas (ANZECC TFMPA 1999).

Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park, Marine Park and Marine Reserve are in the Flinders marine bioregion, as identified by the Interim Marine and Coastal Regionalisation for Australia (IMCRA). This regionalisation identified 60 marine bioregions, five of which apply to Victorian waters (IMCRA Technical Group 1998). The planning area protects approximately 1.1% of the bioregion.

The Flinders marine bioregion extends across Bass Strait and includes waters surrounding Tasmania's Flinders Island and other granite islands. It is characterised by cool wet winters and warm summers, predominately granite and unconsolidated clastic sediments with rocky headlands and promontories interspersed by long sandy beaches, highly variable wave exposure, and high fish and plant species richness (IMCRA Technical Group 1998). Including Tasmanian waters, the planning area contains the only marine protected areas in the Flinders bioregion.

Indigenous tradition indicates that the park is part of *Country* of Gunai / Kurnai and Boonwurrung people (section 5.1). At the time of publication there were several Indigenous groups asserting traditional ownership of the planning area.

As part of the Wilsons Promontory subcatchment, the planning area is influenced by activities in the catchment, within the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority's area of responsibility. All catchment discharges into the planning area originate in Wilsons Promontory National Park, a highly protected catchment.

Spectacular and diverse natural environments interspersed with farmland and small rural townships typify the region surrounding the planning area. The granite outcrops and white sandy beaches of Wilsons Promontory contrast with the extensive tidal inlets of Corner Inlet and Nooramunga to the north of the planning area. Coastal attractions surrounding the planning area contrast with the rainforest and Mountain Ash forests of Tarra–Bulga National Park, in the Strzelecki Ranges north of Yarram.

The planning area is in Tourism Victoria's Gippsland marketing and promotion region. Camping and accommodation areas close to the planning area include Tidal River and designated overnight camping areas within Wilsons Promontory National Park, and at Port Albert, Port Welshpool, Port Franklin, Yanakie, Sandy Point and Walkerville. The Gippsland region receives 7% of all tourist visits to Victoria (Tourism Victoria 2002a), comprising 1.7 million domestic overnight visitors, 3.6 million domestic day visitors, and 56 000 international overnight visitors (Tourism Victoria 2002b).

The waters of Wilsons Promontory Marine Park between Entrance Point and Five Mile Beach are part of the Port of Corner Inlet and Port Albert. Port services, including the maintenance of navigation aids in this area, are managed by Gippsland Ports.

The planning area protects the entire open coastline of Wilsons Promontory, from Shallow Inlet in the west to Entrance Point in the east. It is complemented by a number of nearby parks, including Corner Inlet Marine National Park, Corner Inlet, Nooramunga and Shallow Inlet Marine and Coastal Parks, Cape Liptrap Coastal Park and the marine protected area of the Kent Group National Park and Marine Reserve (Tasmania), as well as a range of other natural attractions in the region.

2.2 Parks and reserve significance and values

The planning area makes a valuable contribution to Victoria's parks system, which aims to protect viable representative samples of the State's natural marine and terrestrial

environments. Protected areas also provide opportunities for visitors to enjoy and appreciate natural and cultural values, and many make important contributions to tourism.

Wilson's Promontory Marine National Park is assigned the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) Category II of the United Nations List of National Parks and Protected Areas. Category II areas are managed primarily for ecosystem protection and recreation. Wilson's Promontory Marine Park and Wilson's Promontory Marine Reserve are assigned the IUCN Category VI. Category VI areas are managed primarily for the sustainable use of natural ecosystems.

In 1982 a Biosphere Reserve centred on Wilson's Promontory National Park was designated under the UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) Man and the Biosphere Program. There are 12 Biosphere Reserves in Australia, of which four are in Victoria. Wilson's Promontory Marine Park, Marine Reserve and parts of the Marine National Park (i.e. those areas that were previously part of the marine reserve) were designated as part of the buffer zone for the Biosphere Reserve.

In recognition of the area's outstanding values and its heritage importance, Wilson's Promontory Marine Park, Marine Reserve, and sections of Wilson's Promontory Marine National Park (i.e. those areas that were previously part of the marine reserve) have also been listed on the Register of the National Estate.

The area included in the planning area is significant to many people in the community, especially to the Gunai / Kurnai and Boonwurrung Indigenous people, who are traditionally and culturally associated with the area. The land and waters of the planning area are integral to the dreaming and culture of the Traditional Owners.

Important values for the planning area are listed below:

Natural values

- Victoria's southernmost and largest Marine National Park
- the only marine protected area within the Flinders bioregion

- granite habitats, which are unusual in Victorian marine waters, including extensive heavy reefs with smooth surfaces, boulders and rubble and low-profile reefs
- biological communities with distinct biogeographic patterns, including shallow subtidal reefs, deep subtidal reefs, intertidal rocky shores, sandy beaches, seagrass and subtidal soft substrates
- abundant and diverse marine flora and fauna, including hundreds of fish species and invertebrates such as sponges, ascidians, sea whips and bryozoans
- 68 species of marine flora and fauna recorded, or presumed to be, at their eastern or western distributional limits
- important breeding sites for a significant colony of Australian Fur Seals
- important habitat for several threatened shorebird species, including species listed under international migratory bird agreements
- outstanding landscapes, seascapes and spectacular underwater scenery
- opportunities for scientific investigation and learning in an area with minimal human disturbance.

Cultural values

- seascape of high traditional and cultural significance to Indigenous people
- cultural places and objects of significance to Indigenous people
- part of a past land link to Tasmania occupied and used by Indigenous people
- Indigenous cultural lore and interest maintained by the Gunai / Kurnai and Boonwurrung people
- important maritime and other history
- historic shipwrecks, many of which are listed on the Victorian Heritage Register
- opportunities for community involvement, partnerships and participation in management

- opportunities for cultural values investigation and learning in an area with minimal human disturbance.

Recreational and tourism values

- magnificent underwater seascapes presenting numerous opportunities for diving and snorkelling
- spectacular landscapes and intertidal areas for exploring
- opportunities for passive recreation, relaxation and reflection on a wild and remote coastline
- boat-based camping in a remote and unique setting
- the southernmost tip of the Australian mainland
- interpretation of natural and cultural values.

2.3 Evidence of past use

As recently as 10 000 years ago, sea levels were about 50 metres lower than today and Victoria was connected to Tasmania by a 'land bridge' (Wallis 1998). During this time the planning area was a terrestrial habitat inhabited by Indigenous people.

Cultural places and objects within the planning area and adjoining Wilsons Promontory National Park provide evidence of Indigenous occupation from at least 6500 years ago, although Indigenous people have occupied these areas for much longer (section 5.1). The Traditional Owners hunted and gathered seasonally abundant food, including mutton birds, seals, fruit, yams, eggs and shellfish (Collett 1994). They also fished the streams and coastal waters with net or line, or by spear from the shore or from bark canoes (Collett 1994).

Until the arrival of Europeans in the area, Indigenous people travelled from the mainland to various offshore islands, but their utilisation of offshore resources was probably not extensive (Coutts 1981).

The planning area and adjoining land have a history of resource use and commerce dating back to the early 19th century, including shipping, sealing and whaling, timber harvesting, grazing, tin mining, quarrying and

gold prospecting (section 5.2). Evidence of these activities is present today, including several shipwrecks and relics of the Refuge Cove whaling station and Sealers Cove timber settlement.

Uncontrolled commercial exploitation of the marine environment in the 19th century resulted in the serious decline of many marine species, including four species of marine mammals — Australian Fur Seal, New Zealand Fur Seal, Australian Sea-lion and Southern Elephant Seal. By 1860, when the sealing trade ceased, all four species were almost extinct. Today only the Australian Fur Seal and New Zealand Fur Seal are present in the planning area.

A light station constructed from locally quarried granite was established at South East Point in 1853 to help guide ships through Bass Strait. This light station and associated buildings, among the earliest constructed on the Victorian coast, are still functioning today.

The many shipwrecks within the planning area are evidence of extensive shipping activities, including early exploration, marine surveys and commercial use (e.g. fishing, sealing, whaling, timber milling, mining, communication and coastal trading). Sheltered coves on the eastern coast that were charted as safe anchorages are still in use today.

In more recent years the planning area has made important social and economic contributions. Commercial fishing activities included fishing for rock lobster and abalone, and mesh netting (ECC 2000). Recreational diving and harvesting of marine life has also been popular. Commercial and recreational harvesting is still permitted within the marine park and marine reserve.

2.4 The park visitor

The planning area adjoins Wilsons Promontory National Park, which attracts over 380 000 visit-days per year (Parks Victoria 2002a). The high visitor numbers are due primarily to the natural attraction of the area, but also in part to the establishment of well-serviced camping and lodge accommodation at Tidal River.

Tidal River, about 30 kilometres from the main entrance to Wilsons Promontory National Park, is the main destination for most day and overnight visitors, and has traditionally been

the base from which visitors explore and enjoy the surrounding marine and terrestrial environment. Most visitors are from Melbourne or from other parts of Gippsland, and arrive by road. Boat-based visitors can also access the planning area from outside Wilsons Promontory National Park. Visitors are attracted to the area's remoteness, outstanding landscapes and seascapes, and spectacular underwater scenery. Boating, birdwatching, diving, snorkelling, beach walking, swimming and surfing are popular recreational activities in the planning area.

Lodge and camping accommodation is available all year at Tidal River. Overnight camping is also permitted at specified coastal locations on Wilsons Promontory (Johnny Souey Cove, Sealers Cove, Refuge Cove, Little Waterloo Bay and Oberon Bay), and bunk-style accommodation is available at the light station on South East Point (sections 6.2 and 6.3).

The marine and terrestrial areas of Wilsons Promontory form one of Victoria's most important tourist destinations and South Gippsland's biggest tourist drawcard. The planning area therefore makes a major contribution to regional and state economies.

The *Gippsland Regional Tourism Development Plan 2004–2007* (Tourism Victoria 2004) sets the tourism framework for Gippsland, including the planning area.

2.5 Legislation and ECC recommendations

The planning area is reserved and managed under the National Parks Act. The Act requires the Secretary to DSE to preserve and protect the natural condition of the park and its natural, cultural and other features and, subject to this, to provide for the use of the park by the public for enjoyment, recreation and education. Appropriate research activities are also provided for under the Act. The National Parks (Park) Regulations 2003 apply to the planning area.

All forms of extraction, including recreational and commercial fishing and shellfish collection, are prohibited within Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park under the National Parks Act and regulations. A Statewide Compliance Strategy and a Regional

Compliance Plan have been developed in partnership with Fisheries Victoria – Department of Primary Industries to manage compliance with the no-fishing provisions within the park (section 8.3).

Where fishing is allowed, in Wilsons Promontory Marine Park and Marine Reserve, the *Fisheries Act 1995* (Vic.) and Regulations apply.

The objects and provisions of the National Parks Act set the framework for management of the planning area (appendix 1). Specific legislation and ECC recommendations accepted by government also govern particular aspects of management of the planning area, as described below and in subsequent sections of the plan.

The *Coastal Management Act 1995* (Vic.) applies to the use and any development of all of the planning area.

The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cwlth) applies to the whole of the planning area with respect to actions that have, will have or are likely to have a significant impact on matters of national environmental significance including listed threatened species and communities, listed migratory species in the park.

The *Archaeological and Aboriginal Relics Preservation Act 1972* (Vic.) and the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984* (Cwlth) apply to the park and protect all Aboriginal cultural heritage values, including places and objects (section 5.1).

The *Native Title Act 1993* (Cwlth) applies to the management of the planning area.

A joint application for a native title determination, which covers the planning area among other areas, was lodged with the Native Title Tribunal on 17 March 1997 (VG6005/98 Gunai / Kurnai / Boonerwung). The implementation of this management plan will take into account the existence of this and any future outcomes of the application.

The *Parks Victoria Act 1998* (Vic.) enables management services for the planning area to be provided by Parks Victoria on behalf of the Secretary to DSE.

Other legislation, and policies and guidelines (section 2.6) at both the Commonwealth and State levels apply to management of the planning area and specific activities and uses.

ECC recommendations

The former Environment Conservation Council (ECC) in its *Marine, Coastal and Estuarine Investigation Final Report*, recommended the creation of Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park for its contribution to a comprehensive, adequate and representative system of marine protected areas along the Victorian coast (ECC 2000). Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park is the only Marine National Park in the Flinders bioregion.

The ECC also made a number of recommendations that relate to the park. The recommendations included:

RA9 Use of Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park in accordance with the general recommendations for Marine National Parks.

R3 Planning and management relating to traditional interests and uses in coastal marine areas to be based on recognition and respect for the traditional relationship of Aboriginal people with the land and sea.

R13 Further research to be undertaken on biological community composition and structure, both within and external to marine protected areas, with an emphasis on assessing the impacts of harvesting marine fauna.

R14 Assessments to be made and strategies developed for protection of vulnerable or threatened marine species and communities, using the provisions of the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* (Vic.) as appropriate.

R18 Measures to be implemented by responsible agencies to reduce the risk of marine pest species arriving in Victoria, and to ensure a rapid and effective response in the event of an introduction.

R26 Public land and waters continue to be available for a wide range of tourism and recreational uses. Development should not preclude public access to foreshore and

offshore areas, other than to meet safety and security requirements that cannot be achieved in other ways.

R34 Priority be given to establishing monitoring programs for Marine National Parks to determine the extent to which these areas are meeting their objectives.

All of the recommendations for Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park were accepted by the Victorian Government without alterations (Government of Victoria 2002).

Wilsons Promontory Marine Park and Wilsons Promontory Marine Reserve were originally declared as a result of Land Conservation Council recommendations for the South Gippsland Area District 2 (LCC 1982) and subsequent Government decisions. The ECC subsequently recommended that these areas be retained, except for parts to be included in Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park (Recommendation D: Existing Parks) (ECC 2000).

The ECC also recommended that 'existing regulations be amended to allow recreational harvesting in those areas of the existing Wilsons Promontory Marine Parks (including the marine reserve) where commercial harvesting is recommended to be allowed' (Recommendation D1) (ECC 2000). This recommendation was accepted by Government (Government of Victoria 2002), and implemented when Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park was established on 16 November 2002.

2.6 Policies and guidelines

The planning area is also managed in accordance with Parks Victoria's operational policies and as appropriate, consistent with other relevant policies and guidelines including:

- *Victoria's System of Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries Management Strategy 2003–2010* (Parks Victoria 2003a)
- *Indigenous Partnership Strategy and Action Plan* (Parks Victoria 2005a)
- *Guidelines for Working with Aboriginal Communities and Protection of Cultural Sites* (Parks Victoria 2002)

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- *Heritage Management Strategy* (Parks Victoria 2003b)
 - *National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development* (COAG 1992)
 - *National Strategy for the Conservation of Australia's Biological Diversity* (ANZECC 2001)
 - *Victoria's Biodiversity Strategy* (NRE 1997a).
- The planning area is also managed within a broader context of a number of other plans and strategies, including:
- *Gippsland Boating Coastal Action Plan* (GCB 2002b)
 - *Gippsland Estuaries – Coastal Action Plan* (GCB in prep).
 - *Integrated Coastal Planning for Gippsland – Coastal Action Plan* (GCB 2002a)
 - *Nature Based Tourism – Directions and Opportunities for Victoria 2000–2003* (Tourism Victoria 2000).
 - *Policy for Sustainable Recreation and Tourism on Victoria's Public Land* (NRE 2002)
 - *Victorian Coastal Strategy* (VCC 2002)
 - *Victorian Heritage Strategy – Shipwrecks 2005* (Heritage Victoria 2000)
 - *West Gippsland Regional Catchment Strategy 2004 to 2009* (WGCMA 2004).

3 STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

3.1 Vision

A future visitor to Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park, Marine Park and Marine Reserve finds outstanding marine environments renowned internationally for their spectacular underwater scenery, distinct combinations of habitats, and biological communities unique to this region.

A visit to the area reveals a fine example of Victoria's world-class system of marine protected areas, preserving a diversity of habitats from deep subtidal reef areas supporting massive sponges, whip corals and colonial ascidians to expansive areas of open sea. Areas of open sea provide feeding areas for pelagic marine mammals and reptiles, including the Southern Right Whale and Leatherback Turtle.

Indigenous cultural heritage is respected, protected and managed through a strong working partnership with Indigenous communities, informed by a sound understanding of the traditional and cultural and significance of Yiruk / Wamoom *Country* to Indigenous people. This significance includes cultural lore and the interests and rights of Indigenous people in the area.

Post-settlement cultural heritage is protected and managed, and there is an increased understanding of historical values and their physical condition. The links between Indigenous cultural heritage and post-settlement cultural heritage are well understood and are incorporated into contemporary park management.

Community views and aspirations are respected and are incorporated into the management of the planning area.

The remote and pristine nature of Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park and the adjacent marine park and marine reserve is well protected with seamless management across the marine and adjacent terrestrial environments.

Complementary adjacent, coastal and catchment management is helping to protect the area from threatening processes,

particularly introduced marine pests, pollution and inappropriate development.

Research and monitoring programs assist sound management and an increased understanding of the area's values and ecological processes.

Opportunities for learning about the natural and cultural values of Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park, Marine Park and Marine Reserve are readily available through the Tidal River Visitor Centre, and through a range of programs for schools and the community. These programs contribute to improved visitor behaviour, aiding the protection of natural and cultural values.

Local and international visitors are attracted to explore the unique marine environments. Visitors undertake a number of sustainable recreational activities, such as exploring the area by boat, birdwatching, diving and snorkelling, swimming and surfing, which make a valuable contribution to regional tourism. Divers and snorkellers are awed and inspired as they experience the spectacular underwater scenery.

Community groups and volunteers work collaboratively with Parks Victoria to foster an appreciation of the values of the planning area.

3.2 Zoning

A park management zoning scheme is normally used to define areas where various types and levels of use are appropriate. However, management zones do not need to be defined in Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries because the management aims for these areas are clearly outlined in the National Parks Act and are consistent across all Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries (section 2.5 and appendix 1).

An Overlay, 'Special Protection Area – Natural Values', is used to highlight additional special protection requirements for all islands within the planning area, and areas surrounding Kanowna Island.

The overlay characteristics are shown in table 1.

TABLE 1 MANAGEMENT OVERLAY

| OVERLAY | AREA/LOCATION | VALUES | GENERAL MANAGEMENT AIM | ACCESS |
|--|--|---|--|---|
| Special Protection Area – Natural Values | Areas detailed in figure 3, and all islands, except the beach areas on Great Glennie and Rabbit Islands (<2% of area). | Significant habitat areas, including breeding areas for sea birds and Australian Fur Seals. | Protect significant sea bird and Australian Fur Seal habitat areas from impacts associated with human disturbance. | <p>Motorised and non-motorised vessels, including sea-kayaks, are prohibited from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – within 200 m of Kanowna Island from November to January (inclusive), except as otherwise indicated by a permit or other authority <p>and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – within 50 m of Kanowna Island from February to October (inclusive) (section 6.3). <p>Access is prohibited on all islands, except beach areas on Great Glennie and Rabbit Islands (section 6.2). This includes island areas above mean high water mark which are areas of Wilsons Promontory National Park (Parks Victoria 2002a).</p> |

The boundaries of the planning area and the overlay location are shown in figure 2. Details of the overlay are shown in figure 3.

3.3 Management directions

Major management directions for the planning area are outlined below.

Natural values conservation

- Natural processes, including competition, predation, recruitment and disturbance, will be protected to ensure an overall benefit to the biodiversity and variety of marine ecological communities in the planning area.
- Identified threats to the natural and cultural values of the planning area will be minimised through addressing the outcomes of ongoing monitoring, risk assessment and, where feasible, complementary adjacent, coastal and catchment management.
- Existing populations of threatened species will be maintained, and where appropriate restored, in the long term.
- In the long term, the quality of water entering the planning area will be

improved, in keeping with the *West Gippsland Regional Catchment Strategy* (WGCMA 2004), *West Gippsland River Health Strategy* (WGCMA 2005), and *Gippsland's Water Quality Action Plan* (WGCMA & EGCMA 2005).

- Compliance with legislated provisions that prohibit extractive activities, including fishing and shellfish collection in the Marine National Park, will be achieved through education, information, community support, and improved surveillance and enforcement.
- Research and monitoring will be undertaken to improve the scientific basis for the management of marine protected areas, including baseline data collection, marine habitat mapping, and threat assessment as outlined in the statewide Management Strategy (Parks Victoria 2003a), and through collaborative research links.

Cultural values conservation

- Indigenous places and objects will be protected from interference or damaging activities.

- The Traditional Owners' cultural lore, interests and rights in the waters and land, and aspirations for *Country*, will be reflected in the planning area's management, in accordance with legislation and policies.
- Indigenous cultural lore relating to *Country* will be respected, promoted and interpreted in accordance with the views of the Traditional Owners.
- Research into Indigenous and historic cultural heritage of the planning area, including places, objects and cultural lore, will be encouraged and supported as appropriate, in conjunction with the relevant Indigenous and wider communities.
- Historic relics and places, including shipwrecks, will be conserved by protecting them from damaging or inappropriate activities.

The park visit

- Recreation opportunities will be provided in accordance with table 2.
- Visitor understanding and appreciation of the planning area's natural and cultural values will be enhanced by the implementation of an integrated three-year rolling information, interpretation and education plan to provide direction for the management of the planning area and adjoining Wilsons Promontory National Park
- Management of visitor access will be integrated with management of the adjoining Wilsons Promontory National Park and Corner Inlet Marine National Park, Corner Inlet and Nooramunga Marine and Coastal Parks.
- Recreation activities will be managed to encourage visitors' enjoyment and understanding, while minimising impact on planning area values.
- Visitors will be encouraged to adopt minimum impact techniques and to adhere to industry-developed standards appropriate to their activity.

- Licensed tour operators will be encouraged to offer a range of minimal-impact recreation activities that are consistent with aims for the planning area.
- Tourist products, services and accommodation in the region will be encouraged to take advantage of the planning area as a destination, lessen impacts on planning area values and give visitors to the region a wider range of experiences.

Community awareness and involvement

- Strong collaborative partnerships will be developed with the Traditional Owners to facilitate the reflection of their cultural lore, rights, and interests and aspirations in the area's planning and management.
- Friends, volunteers, educational institutes, Indigenous and other community groups will be encouraged and supported to participate in aspects of management that relate to their interests.
- An awareness and understanding of the planning area and its management, and a sense of custodianship, will be developed among local communities and visitors.
- Strong relationships will be developed and maintained with people, groups and communities with strong connections or interests in the planning area as a basis for encouraging their appropriate participation in its management.
- Collaborative partnerships will be established with relevant agencies to ensure ongoing compliance and future protection of the planning area.
- Ongoing opportunities for individuals, groups, communities and government agencies will be given to discuss aspirations and issues of mutual concern relating to the planning area.

TABLE 2 SUMMARY OF RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

| ACTIVITY | PLANNING AREA | MANAGEMENT OVERLAY - SPECIAL PROTECTION AREA - NATURAL VALUES |
|--|----------------------|--|
| (Percentage of the planning area) | (100%) | (<2%) |
| Aircraft (landing) (section 6.8) | N | N |
| Anchoring (section 6.3) | Y | N |
| Bait collection | N | N |
| Birdwatching | Y | Y |
| Boat launching (Norman Bay) (section 6.3) | Y | N |
| Camping (boat-based) (section 6.3) | Y | N |
| Diving and snorkelling (section 6.4) | Y | Y |
| Dog (section 6.5) | N | N |
| Feeding wildlife | N | N |
| Fires on beaches (section 6.5) | N | N |
| Fishing (all forms) – Marine National Park | N | N |
| Fishing (all forms) – Marine Park & Marine Reserve (section 6.6) | Y | N |
| Fossil collection | N | N |
| Intertidal collecting | N | N |
| Kite boarding / wind surfing (section 6.3) | Y | N |
| Licensed tours (section 6.7) | Y | Y |
| Mooring (section 6.3) | N | N |
| Motorised boating (including personal water craft) (section 6.3) | Y | N |
| Nature observation | Y | Y |
| Nature photography/filming / painting, etc | Y | Y |
| Picnicking | Y | Y |
| Prospecting and metal detecting | N | N |
| Rafting / canoeing / sea-kayaking (section 6.3) | Y | N |
| Sailing (section 6.3) | Y | N |
| Shell collection | N | N |
| Sightseeing | Y | Y |
| Surfing / boogie boarding / surf skiing (section 6.3) | Y | N |
| Swimming (section 6.5) | Y | Y |
| Walking (intertidal zone) (section 6.5) | Y | Y |
| Waterskiing / wake boarding (section 6.3) | Y | N |
| Whale / dolphin / seal watching (section 6.3) | Y | N |
| Wreck diving (section 6.4) | Y | Y |

Key:

- Y Yes – subject to overlay prescriptions and conditions prescribed by legislation, licensed tour permits or elsewhere in the plan, as indicated.
- N Not permitted.

4 STRATEGIES FOR NATURAL VALUES CONSERVATION

4.1 Geological and geomorphological features

A granitic batholith formed by igneous intrusions during the Devonian period (379–391 million years ago) is the major geological structure within the planning area (Wallis 1998; Birch 2003). Overlying the granite are Quaternary sediments formed as a result of major changes in sea level during the Pleistocene epoch (10 000 – 2 million years ago) (Wallis 1998).

The granitic batholith is one of the most exposed and largest continuous regions of granite on the Victorian coast, and extends to north-eastern Tasmania and along its east coast (Rosengren 1989; Wallis 1998).

Coastal landforms of the planning area are influenced more by the pattern of fractures and joints in the granite than by its mineralogy (Bird 1993). These fractures have guided dissection, and the bays and headlands, coves, clefts and caves were shaped by stream incision and marine erosion (Bird 1993).

Many geomorphological features are intrinsic elements of the *Country* of Traditional Owners in accordance with their tradition.

Wilson's Promontory forms an important divide between the two main sand types in southern Australia. Yellow lime-rich (over 30% carbonate) sands occur to the west and white silica-rich (less than 5% carbonate) sands to the east (Wallis 1998). There is some overlap of the two types around the Promontory. The differing sand types influence the nature of marine ecological communities, including sandy beaches and subtidal soft substrates (section 4.4).

Two major geological studies have been undertaken within or near the planning area (Tuddenham 1970; Wallis 1981). The submarine topography of the offshore granite areas resembles that of the adjacent coast (Rosengren 1989). The submerged terrain includes bold underwater outcrop slopes and cliffs, massive boulder piles and broad, gently sloping sand plains with occasional partly buried granite boulders (Rosengren 1989).

Submarine features of the planning area are largely the result of two groups of processes:

- weathering, erosion and deposition during periods of lower sea levels
- submergence during the Holocene (<10 000 years ago) marine transgression, reaching a maximum between 6000 and 4000 years ago (Rosengren 1989).

The granitic batholith of Wilson's Promontory National Park contains a variety of features of national geological and geomorphological significance (Buckley 1993; Parks Victoria 2002a). It is highly likely that similar features are present in the submarine areas of the planning area, which is yet to be surveyed extensively.

Because of the robust nature of the granitic material, there is little threat to geological and geomorphological features from visitors or management activity.

Aims

- Identify geological and geomorphological features of the planning area and protect them from potentially damaging human activities.
- Allow natural geological and geomorphological processes to continue without human interference.
- Provide opportunities for appropriate research into, appreciation of, and education about geological and geomorphological features.

Management strategies

- *Identify gaps in knowledge and encourage surveys of the submarine geological and geomorphological features within the planning area, including sites of significance that interact with hydrodynamic and biological processes.*
- *Manage identified significant sites to ensure that human-induced impacts are minimised.*
- *Provide information, interpretation and education programs that promote appreciation by visitors of geological and*

geomorphological features, including Indigenous perspectives (section 6.1)

- *Encourage further research to identify geomorphological features of special significance to the Traditional Owners and protect them from damaging or inappropriate activities (sections 5.1 and 8.2).*
- *Consider the significance of geomorphological features to Traditional Owners in planning and implementing management activities and interpreting features (sections 5.1 and 6.1).*

4.2 Catchment and water quality

Catchment influences

The planning area lies within the Wilsons Promontory subcatchment (South Gippsland Basin) of the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority (WGCMA) area (WGCMA 2005). All discharges into the planning area originate in Wilsons Promontory National Park, and include Tidal and Darby Rivers, Miranda, Sealers, Hobbs, Cove, Freshwater, First Bridge, Ferr, Picnic, Roaring Meg, Frasers, Growler and Whisky Creeks, and numerous intermittent creeks.

The entire subcatchment is managed under the provisions of the National Parks Act, and is highly protected from adverse catchment activities that might otherwise result in industrial, agricultural or domestic pollution. Furthermore, additional zones and overlays within Wilsons Promontory National Park afford a higher degree of protection to the catchment (Parks Victoria 2002a). As an example, the general management aim for the Mount Vereker Creek Natural Catchment Area is to maintain or enhance the area's essentially natural condition and preclude certain activities, including the making of roads (Parks Victoria 2002a).

The Wilsons Promontory subcatchment is significant in that it is one of the few areas in Victoria where rivers and streams are largely unmodified by drainage and engineering works, free of introduced fish and aquatic weeds, and relatively free of additional nutrients and chemical pollutants (Parks Victoria 2002a). Aside from prescribed burning, past logging of the Sealers Creek catchment, historic stock grazing, and the

provision of visitor facilities and infrastructure (in particular Tidal River), the catchment of the planning area has endured minimal human induced disturbance since European settlement. Given the relatively undisturbed nature of the catchment and minimal catchment-related influences, the quality of water entering the planning area is generally exceptional.

However, certain activities within and adjacent to the planning area have the potential to cause detrimental impacts on the quality of water entering the planning area, and subsequent impacts to the planning area's natural values. Wilsons Promontory National Park receives over 380 000 visit days per year (section 2.4). Potentially threatening processes originating from the catchment (in particular in and around Tidal River) and associated with such visitor pressure include: accelerated erosion from visitor trampling, chemical and other pollutants, litter, bacterial contamination, and increased stormwater flows from hard-surfaced areas. Although these pollution sources have the potential to enter the planning area, the risk to public safety and/or natural values within the planning area is thought to be negligible. Nevertheless, potential sources of catchment pollution, particularly from Tidal River, will be assessed on an ongoing basis through regular monitoring by WGCMA, and a targeted monitoring program will be developed should the need be identified.

The wastewater collection and treatment system at Tidal River has been upgraded to ensure that only tertiary-treated effluent is discharged into the settlement ponds. Seepage from the settlement ponds generally travels southwest towards Norman Bay. Groundwater at this site will therefore be monitored continually for potential contamination, and to ensure compliance with Environment Protection Authority (EPA) licence conditions.

Other sources of pollution for the planning area include human waste disposal facilities at the South East Point Lightstation and other visitor sites in Wilsons Promontory National Park. An upgraded system for human waste disposal is planned for the Lightstation (Parks Victoria 2002a), and composting toilets have recently been installed at Sealers Cove and Refuge Cove to prevent pollution from these sources.

Aside from monitoring in accordance with EPA licence requirements for the wastewater collection and treatment system at Tidal River, existing water quality monitoring programs in the catchment of the planning area are limited. WGCMA will be commencing monthly water quality monitoring in Tidal River in 2006 (WGCMA & EGCMA 2005). There is scope to expand an existing Waterwatch program to key sites in the area, including Sealers Creek and other creeks in the southern section of Wilsons Promontory National Park (section 8.2). These sites would be used as reference points for comparison with other Waterwatch monitoring sites outside the catchment of the planning area.

The Integrated Coastal Planning for Gippsland — Coastal Action Plan (GCB 2002a) emphasises the importance of an integrated approach to planning and management of the marine and coastal environment. It seeks to achieve integration between municipal planning schemes (South Gippsland Shire Council), public land policy and public land management plans in Gippsland.

The West Gippsland Regional Catchment Strategy (WGCMA 2004) applies to land and water within the region administered by the West Gippsland CMA, including the planning area. The strategy aims to provide a strategic management framework for the protection of natural values within the catchment, including coastal and marine environments.

West Gippsland CMA's *River Health Strategy* (WGCMA 2005) identified the Wilsons Promontory subcatchment as having high environmental and social values. The *River Health Strategy* aims to protect existing high environmental and social values. The purpose of the strategy is to find a balance between the protection, maintenance and enhancement of the environmental value of a natural river system and the processes required to sustain river health, while protecting, maintaining or enhancing additional social and economic values important to the local community.

Gippsland's Water Quality Action Plan (WGCMA & EGCMA 2005) aims to protect and preserve surface water quality throughout west and east Gippsland, by identifying water quality issues and prioritising actions to address these issues across the region.

Marine pollution

The proximity of the planning area to heavy ship movement makes it vulnerable to oil or chemical spills. The impact of such an event could be catastrophic. Shipping lanes through or near the planning area are mapped on RAN Hydrographic Service charts (AUS 801), and an Inshore Traffic Zone exists to reduce the possibility of ship collisions (section 7.1, figure 2). The planning area is also frequently used by recreational and commercial vessels.

In recent years, a minor oil or other chemical spill has occurred within or adjacent the planning area approximately every 1–2 years (Mackenzie pers. comm. 2004). Fortunately, all spills of heavy oil that have occurred in the region have dissipated offshore or have been cleaned up before reaching the coast. However, in the last 10 years there have been two minor spills that have come ashore at Waterloo Bay and Oberon Bay, although the clean-up effort required was minor. It is quite likely that further minor spills have occurred within the planning area, but have not been detected. No other collisions, strandings or leaks are known to have affected the planning area.

A number of recent vessel strandings, sinkings and mishaps within the planning area have resulted in the removal, salvage or on-site destruction of the vessels.

Localised pollution may result from bilge discharge of recreational or commercial vessels in sheltered harbours such as Refuge Cove. Plastic pollution and other beach-washed litter originating from vessels or shore also pose a threat to the marine environment, including injury or death of marine wildlife through entanglement or ingestion (section 4.4).

Marine Safety Victoria has responsibility, under the *Marine Act 1988* (Vic.) and the National Plan to Combat Pollution of the Sea by Oil and Other Noxious and Hazardous Substances, to ensure that there is an effective response to marine pollution incidents in Victorian waters. The *Victorian Marine Pollution Contingency Plan* (VICPLAN) (MSV 2002) has been prepared by Marine Safety Victoria to meet this responsibility. Under VICPLAN, Toll Westernport is the delegated regional marine pollution control agency for the western section of the planning area (west of South East Point), and Gippsland

Ports is the delegated regional marine pollution control agency for the eastern section (east of South East Point) (section 8.3). The *Westernport Region Marine Pollution Contingency Plan* (Toll Westernport n.d.) describes the arrangements made for the Westernport region, and the *Gippsland Region Marine Pollution Contingency Plan* (Gippsland Ports 2005a) describes arrangements made for the Gippsland region, to provide effective emergency response during a marine pollution incident under VICPLAN.

All wildlife is protected under the *Wildlife Act 1975* (Vic.), and DSE has the responsibility for collecting, assessing, cleaning and rehabilitating wildlife affected by marine pollution. DSE has developed the *Wildlife Response Plan for Oil Spills* (NRE 1997b) to deal with such situations.

The EPA is also responsible for restricting the pollution of State waters, and works closely with Marine Safety Victoria (Parks Victoria 2003a).

Aims

- Ensure the integration of future planning and management for the planning area and adjacent catchment.
- Maintain a high quality of water within the planning area and surrounding waters to ensure that natural biological and physical processes can occur.
- Minimise the impacts on water quality within the planning area from activities within the catchment.

Management strategies

- *Work collaboratively with West Gippsland CMA, South Gippsland Waterwatch and the community to monitor water quality and condition of the catchment, rivers and streams discharging into the planning area.*
- *Work collaboratively with community and government organisations, including the Gippsland Coastal Board, West Gippsland CMA and South Gippsland Shire Council, to ensure the integration of future planning and management of the planning area and adjoining public and nearby freehold land*

in South Gippsland (sections 7.2, 8.2, and 8.3).

- *Liaise with relevant agencies, particularly the West Gippsland CMA, to ensure that the management objectives of the planning area are considered in catchment and other plans for the area, including the:*
 - *West Gippsland Regional Catchment Strategy (WGCMA 2004)*
 - *West Gippsland River Health Strategy (WGCMA 2005)*
 - *Gippsland's Water Quality Action Plan (WGCMA & EGCMA 2005).*
- *Support actions of the Regional Catchment Strategy, the Integrated Coastal Planning for Gippsland – Coastal Action Plan, the River Health Strategy and Gippsland's Water Quality Action Plan that seek to reduce catchment-derived impacts and implement the planning area's vision and directions.*
- *Liaise with South Gippsland Shire Council and relevant agencies to ensure that planning area management objectives are considered, as appropriate, in relation to the Integrated Coastal Planning for Gippsland – Coastal Action Plan (GCB 2002a).*
- *Regularly assess potential sources of catchment pollution, particularly from Tidal River, and develop a targeted monitoring program should the need arise.*
- *Ensure that management actions in Wilsons Promontory National Park address identified threats to water quality from catchment-related activities, including erosion, sedimentation, waste disposal and pollution, particularly in relation to Tidal River and other high use visitor sites.*
- *Through the implementation of the Wilsons Promontory National Park Management Plan (Parks Victoria 2002a), upgrade the sewage waste disposal system and associated infrastructure at the South East Point Lightstation. Ensure any future (if any) discharges into the planning area from this facility meet appropriate EPA standards to protect the environmental values of the planning area.*

- *Work collaboratively with Toll Westernport and Gippsland Ports in the event of oil or chemical spills, in accordance with the Victorian Marine Pollution Contingency Plan (VICPLAN), the Westernport Region Marine Pollution Contingency Plan, and the Gippsland Region Marine Pollution Contingency Plan (section 8.3).*
- *Liase with Marine Safety Victoria to ensure that natural and cultural values of the planning area are considered in any review of the shipping lanes and the Traffic Separation Scheme. Investigate and promote alternative options for the Traffic Separation Scheme which would further minimise potential risks to the values of the planning area (section 7.1).*
- *In the event of an oil spill, work collaboratively with DSE to minimise the impacts on wildlife affected by marine pollution, in accordance with the Wildlife Response Plan for Oil Spills (NRE 1997b).*
- *Routinely and as appropriate, remove plastic pollution and beach-washed litter from the planning area.*

4.3 Hydrodynamics

The Flinders bioregion has less exposure to swells than other bioregions, but is subject to strong current flows and high winds (Parks Victoria 2003a). These winds can create substantial surface waves, affect local currents and cause turbidity. Strong and complex tidal patterns also occur in the planning area.

Water depth in the planning area reaches 30 m around many headlands (Oberon Point to South East Point), and 75 m further offshore between the Anser Group and Forty Foot Rocks.

Surface water temperatures range from 12°C during the cooler months (May to September) to 19°C during the warmer months (November to March). These temperatures are significantly lower (2–3°C) than would be expected at other locations in the same latitude on the Victorian coast, and are comparable to sea temperatures in Tasmanian waters (Bennett & Pope 1953). Wilsons Promontory is significant in that it marks the boundary between the warmer waters of the eastern

Australian coast and the colder waters of central and western Victoria (Wescott 1995).

The tidal range is about 2.5 m (Bennett & Pope 1953) and tides are mostly semi-diurnal with a marked diurnal inequality (i.e. two low tides of different height, and two high tides of different height, within a 24-hour period) (King 1973). Tidal currents around the planning area are strong and have a major influence on the distribution of marine flora and fauna (M. Rodrigue pers. comm. 2004).

The western coast of the planning area is generally subject to a south-west swell, and the eastern coast to a south-east swell (Wescott 1995). The only major current in the planning area is the very weak termination of the East Australian Current (Wescott 1995).

Accelerated changes to the hydrodynamic regime could have an impact on natural values, not only within the planning area but more broadly. Potentially threatening processes include sea-level rise, altered current flows and breakwaters.

Because human-induced changes to local hydrodynamic processes could affect the values of marine protected areas, any proposals for new infrastructure, including artificial reefs, will generally be inappropriate in Marine National Parks or Marine Sanctuaries. Natural hydrodynamic events such as storm surge and regular sand erosion or deposition are considered to be ongoing natural processes.

Aims

- Allow natural hydrodynamic processes to continue without human interference.
- Minimise impacts on planning area values from human-induced changes to local hydrodynamic processes.

Management strategies

- *Investigate the importance of hydrodynamic processes, through the collation of tidal data, current velocities and direction, particularly with respect to the geomorphological and biological values within the planning area.*
- *Following the identification of existing hydrodynamic processes, model future potential changes to hydrodynamic processes caused by accelerated sea-level*

change, and identify potential impacts on park values.

- *Provide advice on planning applications for developments that could affect park hydrodynamic processes as appropriate.*
- *Advise visitors about the dynamic nature of currents and tides in the planning area in order to minimise the risk to personal safety and impacts on natural and cultural values (sections 4.4 and 6.9).*

4.4 Habitats and communities

Marine ecological communities

Marine ecological communities represent a 'community-level' classification approach to give an overview of the larger, more visible and common species within the planning area (Plummer et al. 2003).

Six marine ecological communities are represented within the planning area, reflecting the diversity of habitats: sandy beach, intertidal rocky shore, subtidal reef, seagrass, subtidal soft substrate and pelagic communities (appendix 3). These habitats provide important substrate, food, shelter, and spawning and nursery areas for a variety of marine flora and fauna.

Beach-washed materials in sandy beach habitats are a significant source of food for scavenging birds, and contribute to the detrital cycle that nourishes many of the invertebrates, such as bivalves, living in the sand. However, beach-washed litter washed from beaches within and outside the planning area threatens the values of sandy beach habitats, and many marine organisms can ingest litter or become entangled in it. Oil and chemical spills and other sources of pollution are also major threats to marine ecological communities, particularly sandy beaches (section 4.2).

Dominated by steep granite boulders, the intertidal rocky shore provides habitat for lichens, various brown algae, chitons and ascidians (appendix 3). Because the intertidal area offers the greatest opportunity for visitors to explore marine life without going underwater, careful management is required to ensure protection of natural values from human disturbance. Key threatening processes include illegal harvesting of marine flora and

fauna, trampling, and oil and other chemical spills.

The Victorian Government established a long-term subtidal reef monitoring program in 1998. Since 1998, up to 22 sites have been surveyed over seven censuses (Edmunds et al. 2003). Thirteen of these sites are in Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park, ten are within the marine park and five are within the marine reserve. Over 300 different species in total have been observed in and around Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park (Edmunds et al. 2003). As monitoring continues and longer-term datasets are accumulated, the program will be able to more adequately reflect average trends and ecological patterns occurring in the system.

Refuge Cove appears to support a higher abundance of algae than similar subtidal locations in the region (M. Edmunds pers. comm. 2003). Further investigation is required to determine the cause, and whether it is a natural occurrence.

Introduced marine pests (section 4.6), oil and other chemical spills (section 4.2), pollution (section 4.2), anchor damage (section 4.4) and harvesting (section 6.6) are some of the main processes with potential to threaten the ecological values of subtidal reef areas.

The distribution and abundance of seagrass communities within the planning area has not been studied recently. However, four species of seagrass are known to be present within the planning area. The occurrence of a species of *Posidonia* on the eastern side of Great Glennie Island is significant as it is one of only a few offshore occurrences of this species (Wilson et al. 1990).

Seagrass communities are particularly susceptible to threatening processes such as pollution (e.g. oil spills, effluent discharge and catchment-derived nutrients), marine introduced pests, and mechanical changes (e.g. inappropriate anchoring). Because of the large number of recreational boats staying overnight at Refuge Cove, an ongoing program for minimising the risk of marine pest introduction and subsequent spread within the planning area (section 4.6), and monitoring for impacts associated with anchoring in the cove is a priority.

It is believed that the invertebrate fauna diversity is rich in subtidal soft substrate habitats, and that it varies from place to place because of differences in wave action, level of competition and sediment composition (Plummer et al. 2003).

Species characteristic of the open sea or pelagic environment include those that are pelagic (actively swimming) and planktonic (drifting with the current) (Edgar 2001). Tiny planktonic organisms play an important role in nutrient cycling, dispersal of species and providing food for larger animals, both within the planning area and more broadly in the marine environment.

Illegal harvesting, oil and chemical pollution, dumping wastes, cleaning ship holds, the introduction of marine pests and mechanical changes are significant threats to pelagic species.

Marine flora and fauna

Although the dominant flora and fauna of the planning area consist largely of a mixture of species from adjacent bioregions, eastern and southern province species appear to be more prevalent than western province species (Parks Victoria 2003a). Sixty-eight species of algae, invertebrates and fish are thought to have their distributional limits at or near Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park (Plummer et al. 2003).

The planning area includes feeding areas for a number of threatened birds (Parks Victoria 2002a), including the Hooded Plover, White-bellied Sea-eagle and Caspian Tern, which are listed under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee (FFG) Act. Many of these birds roost and breed on nearby islands and feed within the waters of the planning area. Because the birds are particularly susceptible to disturbance by humans, access to all islands in the area is restricted (see also Parks Victoria 2002a) (section 6.2).

The planning area also protects feeding areas for species of 'national environmental significance' under the Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act. The Caspian Tern and White-bellied Sea-eagle are listed under the China–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement (CAMBA) and the Caspian Tern is

listed under the Japan–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement (JAMBA).

A number of threatened marine fauna have also been recorded within the planning area, including the Australian Fur Seal, Southern Right Whale and Leatherback Turtle.

Kanowna Island and Anderson Islets support a breeding population of 9000 to 10 000 Australian Fur seals (R. Kirkwood pers. comm. 2004), which feed in Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park and surrounding waters. A small breeding colony (about 50 animals) of New Zealand Fur Seals is also present on Kanowna Island. About 50 Australian Fur Seals inhabit Norman Island and feed in Wilsons Promontory Marine Park.

Other marine mammals recorded within the planning area include the Humpback Whale, Andrew's Beaked Whale, Pilot Whale, Sperm Whale, Goose-beaked Whale, Common Dolphin and Bottlenose Dolphin.

Marine mammal viewing occasionally occurs, usually by independent boat operators taking advantage of chance encounters with whales and dolphins, and to a lesser extent as part of organised boat tours. There are restrictions on the distance that visitors may approach these animals (section 6.3). In addition, the *Australian National Guidelines for Whale and Dolphin Watching 2005* (Australian Government 2005) aims to minimise the impacts of whale and dolphin watching by providing advice on watching whales and dolphins in the wild, including observations from the land, water or air, as well as activities such as swimming and diving, touching and noise.

Whales and dolphins passing through the planning area could become stranded, entrapped, entangled or wounded. The *Victorian Cetacean Contingency Plan* (NRE 1999a) details arrangements for responding to such incidents.

The Australian Fur Seal colony on Kanowna Island is susceptible to human-induced disturbance at most times of the year. The long, steep slopes of the islands' coastlines make seals susceptible to injury if they are disturbed by the presence of boats or other unexpected activity, because the seals may panic and flee into the water. During the breeding season (November–January), seal

pups can be crushed in such a stampede (C. Mackenzie pers. comm. 2004).

Boating distance restrictions under the Wildlife Act and the *Australian National Guidelines for Whale and Dolphin Watching 2005* (Australian Government 2005) do not apply to boats approaching seals. However, to minimise disturbance to the Australian Fur Seal colony on Kanowna Island from boating activity, distance restrictions are placed on boats around the most significant population on the island (section 6.3, table 1, and figure 3). In addition, to further inform management of the Australian Fur Seal colony on Kanowna Island, an integrated research project will be developed to assess appropriate and sustainable visitation to Kanowna Island.

All forms of extraction, including recreational and commercial fishing, are prohibited within Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park.

Fishing is permitted within Wilsons Promontory Marine Park and Marine Reserve, in accordance with the provisions of the Fisheries Act (section 6.6). The feeding of animals, including fish and birds, is not permitted within the planning area. The collection of shells and other organisms, dead or alive, from the intertidal areas is also prohibited (section 6.5).

Current ecological research and monitoring is targeted at collecting baseline biological information that will be used to understand long-term changes in populations, abundances, community structures and ecological processes during the life of this plan. Where appropriate, research and monitoring compares areas outside the boundaries of the planning area, with those inside. This work will assist in identifying indicator species and habitats. The results, available on Parks Victoria's website, will enable an assessment of the ecological condition of the planning area to be made.

All species within the planning area listed as threatened or protected by international agreements or legislation are either birds or large transient marine mammals (e.g. Southern Right Whale). This reflects the current vertebrate focus of threatened species management. Managing marine ecological communities within the planning area, rather than threatened species, is also likely to protect and enhance threatened species populations.

Whole-of-habitat management may also result in the protection of species not yet identified because of their rarity or cryptic nature.

Marine plants and animals in the planning area are significant to the Gunai / Kurnai and Boonwurrung people. Indigenous people of the area may have particular cultural, spiritual, traditional or totemic connections to certain marine species.

Aims

- Protect marine ecological communities and indigenous flora and fauna, particularly threatened species.
- Increase knowledge of marine ecological communities, flora and fauna to aid management, protection and appreciation.
- Increase knowledge of key threatening processes to marine ecological communities, flora and fauna, to limit impacts.

Management strategies

- *Map habitats at scales suitable for management purposes, in accordance with statewide habitat mapping programs.*
- *Continue to implement the long-term subtidal reef habitat monitoring program, consistent with relevant statewide marine habitat monitoring programs.*
- *Initiate an investigation of the cause of higher algal abundance in Refuge Cove. Implement an ongoing water quality monitoring program, if appropriate.*
- *Implement priority actions from approved action statements or recovery plans to address threats to threatened species or communities listed under the FFG and EPBC Acts.*
- *Ensure that all significant sightings of marine flora and fauna are recorded on Parks Victoria's Environmental Information System.*
- *Protect the planning area values from identified threatening processes, including the introduction of marine pests (section 4.6), pollution (section 4.2), and, illegal harvesting (section 6.6).*

- *Undertake regular risk assessments to assess major threats to marine ecological communities and species, and implement actions as necessary.*
- *Encourage research into the impacts of key threatening processes, including marine introduced pests, pollution and illegal harvesting.*
- *Develop an integrated research project to assess appropriate and sustainable boat-based visitation to Kanowna Island (section 6.3).*
- *Manage visitor activities to minimise impacts on planning area values, particularly in relation to compliance with no-fishing provisions (section 6.6) and access and distance restrictions for the protection of marine mammal populations (section 6.3).*
- *Promote awareness of minimal impact techniques for marine mammal observation; including those detailed in the Australian National Guidelines for Whale and Dolphin Watching (Australian Government 2005) (section 6.1).*
- *Permit anchoring in the planning area but monitor any impacts, particularly on sensitive marine ecological communities in high use areas (eg. seagrass communities at Refuge Cove), and implement management actions as necessary (section 6.3).*
- *Encourage research into Indigenous cultural lore relating to flora and fauna of the planning area, and reflect outcomes in the management of the planning area in accordance with Park Victoria's policies (sections 5.1, 6.1 and 8.2).*
- *Respond to cetacean incidents in accordance with the Victorian Cetacean Contingency Plan (section 8.3).*

4.5 Landscape and seascape

The Victorian Coastal Strategy (VCC 2002) establishes the framework for long-term ecologically sustainable management of the Victorian coast. The strategy uses Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) principles to integrate planning and management across the land – sea interface. This involves the coordination of coastal and marine

management activities of the various Commonwealth, State and local government agencies and a commitment to community consultation at all levels of planning.

The *Landscape Setting Types for the Victorian Coast* (VCC 1998a) and *Siting and Design Guidelines for Structures on the Victorian Coast* (VCC 1998b) are designed to assist coastal land managers and the community to implement the Victorian Coastal Strategy. This ensures sympathetic development that complements the surrounding landscape and results in sensitive design and development along the Victorian coast.

Landscape setting types on the Victorian coast are used to broadly characterise different landscape types (VCC 1998a). The planning area occurs within Landscape Setting Type 29, Wilsons Promontory.

The special considerations for this landscape setting type include the following:

- Development in the area must respond to and be sympathetic to the outstanding environmental and scenic values of the area.
- Development should be avoided, as it will spoil the wilderness quality.
- Areas adjacent to ‘The Prom’ also require special landscape protection and appropriate planning controls to ensure that development does not impact on landscape values.

The planning area has some of Victoria’s most magnificent underwater seascapes at numerous diving sites (section 6.4). The granite landforms of the adjoining Wilsons Promontory National Park continue underwater. In some areas there are vertical cliffs, in others large slabs with or without cracks (O’Toole & Turner 1990). Boulder slopes with rocks varying from 20 centimetres to 10 metres across are common. Large boulders tumbled on each other have created caves and swim-throughs (O’Toole & Turner 1990). The western side of the planning area has larger drop-offs and bigger boulders than the eastern side, which often has shallower slopes (O’Toole & Turner 1990).

There are breathtaking views of different landscapes and seascapes from within the planning area and the adjacent Wilsons

Promontory National Park. Such views include pristine offshore islands, white sandy beaches, lichen-covered boulders, sheer granite cliffs and spectacular mountain ranges. The natural splendour of the Wilsons Promontory landscape is a major attraction for visitors both to the park and to South Gippsland.

The planning area is significant in that it surrounds the offshore islands of Wilsons Promontory. These islands are relatively remote from vehicular access and from boat ramp access points. They are also all unoccupied and without roads or tracks. These islands have been identified through the *Wilderness Special Investigation Descriptive Report* (LCC 1990) as having high remoteness from settlement and access value, and high aesthetic and biophysical naturalness values. Furthermore, 12 of the islands are designated as the 'Wilsons Promontory Islands Remote and Natural Area'; to protect their remote and natural attributes and prevent new and incremental developments, including the construction of new structures (Parks Victoria 2002a). There has been no specific investigation into the 'wilderness' values of Victoria's marine environment. Nevertheless, the waters of the planning area are one of the few notable exceptions along Victoria's coastline that are remote from urban or rural development or not subject to the direct influence of recreational use, commercial utilisation, domestic or industrial runoff or effluent disposal (LCC 1990).

The landscapes and seascapes of the planning area are an intrinsic element of *Country* of the Traditional Owners.

There are no public utilities or infrastructure within the planning area. Related land-based infrastructure built on the adjoining Wilsons Promontory National Park includes navigational aids and associated infrastructure at Lighthouse Point, Sealers Cove, Refuge Cove, Waterloo Point, South East Point and Citadel Island (section 7.1).

Tidal River village, walking tracks and other items of infrastructure within the national park are visible from within the planning area. Future development within the national park, and on freehold land visible from the planning area, has the potential to threaten landscape and seascape values.

Because the landscapes and seascapes of the planning area are predominantly natural, they are vulnerable to inappropriate development. The *South Gippsland Planning Scheme* (SGSC 1999) provides a statutory framework for managing proposal and developments for land adjacent to the planning area. South Gippsland Shire Council administers the planning scheme, including the assessment of developments that could have an impact on landscape and seascape values. Parks Victoria provides input into planning applications to ensure the protection of planning area values.

Aims

- Preserve and protect the landscape and seascape values of the park, including the natural character, aesthetic qualities and values of significance to Indigenous communities.
- Minimise the visual impact of developments and management activities, including those adjacent to the park.

Management strategies

- *Provide input into landscape character assessments undertaken by South Gippsland Shire Council to ensure that landscape values within and associated with the planning area are recognised.*
- *Liaise with South Gippsland Shire to ensure that future planning applications give due consideration to the land and seascape values of the park, including the Landscape Setting Type's special considerations (VCC 1998a).*
- *Consider the significance of landscape to the Traditional Owners in planning and implementing management activities and interpretation and education programs (sections 4.1, 5.1, 6.1 and 8.2).*

4.6 Marine pests

Over 100 exotic marine species are known to have become established in Victorian marine waters (Hewitt et al. 1999). Some have become marine pests.

There are no records of introduced marine pests or diseases within the planning area. However, given natural or human-aided dispersal and suitable environmental conditions, a number of Victoria's introduced

marine pests have the potential to colonise the planning area. Furthermore, many other marine pests, not yet established in Victorian waters, have the potential to establish in the planning area through national and/or international vessel traffic.

The planning area is vulnerable to ship-borne pest introductions (in ballast water or as fouling organisms on hulls) because of its proximity to international and domestic shipping lanes, and the large volume of domestic and international vessel movements within its waters. There is also the potential for translocation of exotic species through natural means, commercial fishing activities in the marine park and marine reserve, and via recreational activities. Translocation may occur through boat hull and equipment fouling, use of contaminated fishing gear and diving equipment, or the release of contaminated bilge water.

There is an increased risk of marine pest incursions into some of the sheltered coves within the planning area, including Refuge Cove, Home Cove and Great Glennie Island, which are used as safe anchorages or stopovers for yachts, naval vessels, interstate and domestic fishing vessels and recreational powerboats (section 7.1). Refuge Cove in particular is a popular destination and stopover for boats of various sizes (section 6.3).

Impacts from introduced marine pests are as diverse as the species themselves, and include altered nutrient cycles and competition with native species. There may also be economic impacts (e.g. on commercial fisheries) and social impacts (e.g. on public health and safety).

Marine pests can have a devastating impact on Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries. The introduction of marine pests into Victorian waters is listed as a potentially threatening process on Schedule 3 of the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act. Victoria's management priorities in relation to marine pests are set out in the relevant Action Statement (NRE 1999b).

Prevention of marine pest invasions is the most effective management option. Prevention involves reducing the risk that a pest will be introduced to the planning area. In a very limited number of cases, with specific criteria,

control measures may be attempted for established pest populations generally as part of a coordinated regional or national response. However, experience elsewhere has shown that proposals to control established marine pests need to consider fully their likely effectiveness. The interconnectedness of the marine environment and the ability of many marine pests to migrate over long distances mean that control measures may be feasible only in limited circumstances. For example, using techniques that are successful on land, such as physical removal by hand, might make the situation worse, as some marine pests regenerate fully from fragments dislodged during removal. Where implemented, control measures will meet national guidelines for managing marine pests. Because of the possibility of misidentifications or exacerbating the pest problem, control measures will need to be part of authorised programs. In some cases, further nationally coordinated research is required into control measures.

Victorian marine pest emergency management arrangements (*Interim Victorian Protocol for Managing Exotic Marine Organism Incursions*) (NRE 1999c) will form the basis for responding to new introductions and existing incursions of marine pests. The adoption of the *Waste Management Policy (Ships' Ballast Water)* (EPA 2004) for Victorian waters will help reduce the risk of marine pest incursions from ships' ballast water. Emergency responses to marine pest outbreaks in Victoria are managed as part of agreed national arrangements for marine pest emergencies. The Consultative Committee for Introduced Marine Pest Emergencies provides national oversight. Parks Victoria actively supports the protocol, by adopting best practice within the organisation and educating and informing the community about prevention measures.

Vessel cleaning and maintenance guidelines to help prevent the spread of marine pests (DSE 2004) aim to reduce the risk of spreading marine introduced pests by providing practical solutions for vessel operators for cleaning gear and hulls. Supporting initiatives include *EPA Victoria's Cleaner Marinas Guidelines* (EPA 1998).

Parks Victoria Rangers, Fisheries Victoria Fisheries Officers, community-based organisations (e.g. dive clubs) and other park visitors play an important role in the monitoring and early detection of marine introduced pests in the planning area (section 8.2).

Aims

- Minimise the risk of introduction of marine pests by human activities, and their subsequent establishment in the planning area.
- Establish arrangements for the detection of new incursions within the planning area in support of Victorian marine pest management arrangements.
- Implement national or Victoria-wide control arrangements as they relate to the planning area.

Management strategies

- *Support DSE in educating Parks Victoria Rangers, Fisheries Victoria Officers and the community to identify existing and emerging marine pests.*
- *Encourage community groups, researchers, licensed tour operators and contractors to integrate the identification of marine pests into their activities and to report any sightings.*
- *Ensure that the detection of marine pests is reported in accordance with Victorian pest management arrangements and recorded on Parks Victoria's Environmental Information System and other relevant databases.*
- *Manage all marine pest incursions in the planning area in accordance with the Interim Victorian Protocol (NRE 1999c) (section 8.3).*
- *Establish an ongoing program to minimise the risk of marine pest introduction and subsequent spread that addresses improving the understanding of the potential means of introduction and spread*

and formalising arrangements for prevention, reporting, monitoring and response.

- *Undertake authorised pest programs only where research indicates that control or eradication is feasible and likely to be effective or as part of a coordinated regional or national response.*
- *Avoid translocation or new introductions by promoting boat-cleaning and maintenance protocols for all recreational boats and contractors in accordance with the DSE brochure 'Aquatic Pests: Treat 'em mean – keep your boat clean' (section 6.3).*
- *Ensure that management vessels operating in the planning area are maintained in accordance with the Victorian boat-cleaning protocols (DSE 2004).*
- *Liaise with Gippsland Ports to ensure that boat-cleaning protocols are included in contracts, licences or permits for contracted vessels operating in the Port of Corner Inlet.*
- *Encourage recreational divers to adopt protocols to ensure that diving equipment is clean (section 6.4).*
- *Liaise with Fisheries Victoria and commercial fishers to minimise the potential for the introduction of marine pests.*
- *Ensure that any new marine infrastructure within the planning area is treated to remove any marine pests.*
- *Include boat-cleaning protocols in contracts, licences or permits for contracted vessels, research vessels and licensed tour operator vessels operating within the planning area.*

5 STRATEGIES FOR CULTURAL VALUES CONSERVATION

5.1 Indigenous cultural heritage

Indigenous tradition indicates that the waters surrounding Wilsons Promontory are integral to the dreaming and culture of the Gunai / Kurnai and Boonwurrung Indigenous people. Indigenous tradition indicates that the planning area is part of the sacred *Country of Yiruk* for the Gunai / Kurnai people, and *Wamoom* for the Boonwurrung people¹. At the time of publication there were several Indigenous groups asserting traditional ownership over the planning area.

Yiruk / Wamoom contains a strong spiritual energy known as *Marin-e-bek* or *Wea-wuk*, which pervades the environment and all life in it. This energy extends beyond *Yiruk / Wamoom* to the surrounding areas and is a powerful protector highly respected by the Traditional Owners.

Throughout periods of changing sea levels, the Traditional Owners have maintained a strong and continuing association with the planning area for thousands of years. This association is present today.

The planning area and surrounding areas provided important areas for shelter, food collection, story telling, toolmaking, teaching and learning. Children were taught important techniques for the hunting, collection and preparation of seasonally abundant food and other resources, including fruit, yams, eggs, shellfish and other animals. These resources were found in both marine and terrestrial environments. Stories were shared, and children developed an ongoing spiritual association, understanding and respect for the area.

There are historical records of Indigenous travel from the mainland to various off-shore islands surrounding Wilsons Promontory. For example, Smyth (1878) reported an Aboriginal journey from Wilsons Promontory to Rabbit Island, and Jones (1987) describes the seasonal

¹ Unless stated otherwise, information is based on oral history provided by relevant Indigenous communities.

occupation, from about 1500 years ago, of Great Glennie Island. Reports of such visits, however, are rare, and it is generally thought that off-shore ocean resources were largely untapped by Indigenous people (Coutts 1981).

At the time of European settlement, the Traditional Owners had a strong association with the area. European settlement, and use of the land and waters of the planning area, substantially altered this historical association, with a subsequent loss of traditional culture.

The planning area contains evidence of a range of places and objects of particular significance to the Indigenous community, most of which are at or near the high water mark. It is also likely that many cultural places have been preserved beneath the waters of the planning area.

As significant Indigenous places and objects within the planning area become known, some may require active management to ensure their protection, while others may be relatively secure because of their location. Degradation by erosion and pillaging of material are major threats to the integrity of these cultural places and objects. Protection of many of the places and objects within the intertidal area is addressed in a site protection strategy prepared for Wilsons Promontory National Park (Parks Victoria 2002c). Monitoring and management of cultural places and objects will be determined in collaboration with relevant Indigenous communities.

All Indigenous places and objects are protected under the Archaeological and Aboriginal Relics Preservation Act and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act. It is an offence to damage, interfere with or endanger an Aboriginal site, place or object without obtaining prior written consent from the scheduled Aboriginal community. Issues relating to the protection of such cultural heritage and the involvement of the scheduled Aboriginal community are approached in accordance with these Acts.

At the time of publication, the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs was recognised as the scheduled Aboriginal community. Aboriginal Affairs Victoria is to be contacted in relation to

cultural heritage matters in the planning area (section 8.3).

Issues relating to Native Title are dealt with according to the Native Title Act (section 2.5).

Some knowledge of Indigenous cultural lore (including perspectives of environment, landscape and stories) and customs (relating to resource use and land/water management) has been lost to some extent since the arrival of Europeans. However, much detailed knowledge has been retained through the oral history of descendants, historical documents, archaeological and anthropological research. More Indigenous stories, and much more about the significance of places, people in the landscape, timelines, travel routes, the traditional use of natural resources, and land and water/sea management practices, could be discovered.

Parks Victoria respects the Traditional Owners' cultural lore, interests and rights in the land, and aspirations for *Country* and seeks to reflect these in planning and management (Parks Victoria 2005a).

Aims

- Protect Indigenous cultural heritage from interference or damaging activities.
- Nurture Indigenous cultural lore relating to the planning area.

Management strategies

- *Protect Indigenous places and objects from disturbance and damage in partnership with the Traditional Owners and in cooperation with the scheduled Aboriginal community, AAV and the Gippsland Cultural Heritage Unit (sections 8.2 and 8.3), and in accordance with:*
 - *the provisions of relevant legislation including the Archaeological and Aboriginal Relics Preservation Act and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act*
 - *Parks Victoria's Guidelines for Working with Aboriginal Communities and Protection of Cultural Sites (Parks Victoria 2002b).*
- *Incorporate new information about Indigenous cultural heritage into the*

Wilsons Promontory Site Protection Strategy (Parks Victoria 2002a) and manage research, surveys, protection and conservation actions, interpretation and promotion in accordance with the strategy.

- *Assess annual management programs to integrate relevant Indigenous practices and minimise the potential impact of management activities on Indigenous cultural heritage, in consultation with the Traditional Owners and the scheduled Aboriginal community.*
- *Ensure that all management activities are in accordance with the Native Title Act.*
- *Respect Indigenous cultural lore, and the Traditional Owners' aspirations for Country, and in collaboration with them and the scheduled Aboriginal community, and in accordance with Parks Victoria's operational policies, reflect the Traditional Owners' cultural lore, interests and rights in all aspects of planning and management (sections 4.1, 4.4, 4.5, 6.1 and 8.2).*
- *Identify, record and assess the risk of Indigenous places and objects and cultural lore relating to the park, in liaison with AAV and in collaboration with relevant Indigenous communities.*
- *Assess and identify Indigenous cultural heritage suitable for promotion and interpretation in collaboration with relevant Indigenous communities and in liaison with AAV and the Gippsland Cultural Heritage Unit (sections 6.1 and 8.2)*
- *Maintain confidentiality in respect of Indigenous cultural lore, places, objects and aspirations, in accordance with the views of the Traditional Owners (sections 6.1 and 8.2).*

5.2 Maritime and other cultural heritage

The history of the planning area since European settlement is rich in diversity, involving maritime exploration, commercial exploitation, coastal trading and navigation.

On 1 January 1798, during their epic whaleboat voyage from Port Jackson (Sydney Harbour), George Bass and his crew were

probably the first European explorers to sight Wilsons Promontory, although escaped convicts had reached the Glennie Group in 1796 (Hunter 1895). During the return voyage to Port Jackson, Bass landed at Sealers Cove, which he considered suitable as a site for a sealing station to take advantage of the large seal populations on the nearby islands (Hunter 1895). The coves on the eastern coast of Wilsons Promontory were subsequently charted as anchorages, and ships sheltered in them during south-west gales (Lennon 1974).

In the early 1800s an intensive sealing industry developed in Bass Strait, attracting ships from as far away as Europe and America. So intensive was the exploitation that by 1832 the industry was no longer profitable (Townrow 1997).

Commercial whaling was another short-lived industry within the planning area. Groups of whalers operated out of bays and coves of the islands and shores of Bass Strait, including Refuge Cove (formerly Lady Bay) and Sealers Cove within the planning area (Lennon 1974). These shore-based whaling stations quickly destroyed the Bass Strait herds, and by the 1840s most whale hunting had moved into the Antarctic seas.

Whalebone and other material associated with these industries have been found in Refuge Cove during underwater surveys (R. Anderson pers. comm. 2004) (appendix 4).

The remains of a whaling station of State heritage significance are located within Wilsons Promontory National Park at Refuge Cove. This is perhaps the only surviving whaling station in Victoria (Townrow 1997). Remains of a possible sealing or timber cutting site are also present at Home Cove, including the rarely exposed remains of a jetty (appendix 4). Further survey work is required to determine the historical use of this site (R. Anderson pers. comm. 2004).

Refuge and Home Coves are significant in that they represent two of only four remaining sites associated with the sealing and whaling industry in Victoria (Townrow 1997). Historical records also indicate a possible whaling station at Bareback Bay, but no remains have been located there (R. Anderson pers. comm. 2003).

During the 1850s Sealers Cove was established as a shipping port for timber milling operations (Lennon 1974). The industry was organised quickly and become productive within a year. Timber shipments ceased relatively quickly (around 1860), with the demand for timber during the gold rush period exhausting supplies (Lennon 1974). A later mill operated for a short time in the early 1900s, but was burnt out in 1906. Evidence of this operation is present today, including the remains of a jetty visible at low tide (appendix 4).

Granite was quarried at Refuge Cove during the 1880s for the new entrance to the Gippsland Lakes. The quarry is visible on the eastern shore of South Cove, Refuge Cove, where there is evidence of rock drilling, rock removal and landing infrastructure within Wilsons Promontory Marine Park (appendix 4).

Commercial fishing also has flourished during various times around Wilsons Promontory, and still occurs today in parts of the planning area, although not within Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park. In the 1860s Chinese fishermen worked along the coastline of Wilsons Promontory, using Sealers Cove as one of their home ports (Loney 1982). Soon afterwards, Port Welshpool and Port Albert developed as major fishing ports, and many small craft worked around Wilsons Promontory to harvest a great variety of fish (Loney 1982).

By the 20th century lucrative crayfish and abalone industries had developed. These industries continue today in Wilsons Promontory Marine Park and Wilsons Promontory Marine Reserve.

The treacherous coastline and large volume of shipping in the 19th and 20th centuries resulted in many collisions, strandings and shipwrecks in the region (appendix 4). At least 28 shipwrecks have occurred in the planning area, and 14 of those have been located. Some of these are listed on the Victorian Heritage Register (Heritage Victoria 2004).

By the 1850s there was a critical need for a lighthouse on the coast. The Wilsons Promontory Lightstation, which is still operational today, was built on South East Point and commenced operation in 1859. It is one of the earliest lightstations constructed on

the Victorian coast, and is listed on the Register of the National Estate. A dump site on the eastern side of South East Point contains debris, building materials and wreckage below the landing steps. A landing site on the western side of South East Point contains mostly intact landing and cargo handling infrastructure (appendix 4). Management of this maritime heritage infrastructure is guided by the *Conservation Plan, Wilsons Promontory Lighthouse, Victoria* (Nelson et al. 1993) and the *Wilsons Promontory Lighthouse Conservation Plan* (RBAACC 1999), and is integrated with management of Wilsons Promontory National Park (Parks Victoria 2002a).

Historic and cultural places are managed in accordance with the *Heritage Act 1995* (Vic.), the *Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance* (the 'Burra Charter'), Australia ICOMOS 1999), and the *Heritage Management Strategy* (Parks Victoria 2003b).

Heritage Victoria (DSE) has primary responsibility for the management of shipwrecks within the planning area. Parks Victoria has established a Memorandum of Understanding with Heritage Victoria that identifies respective roles and responsibilities with regard to maritime protection, compliance and interpretation of shipwrecks, shipwreck artefacts and other archaeological sites within the planning area.

'Shipping along the Coast' is a priority historical theme identified in the *Heritage Management Strategy* (Parks Victoria 2003b). Wilsons Promontory and the planning area comprise one of three areas along Victoria's coast with a high concentration of shipping-related historic sites, and are a focus for interpretation programs on this theme.

Aims

- Conserve and protect places and values of historic significance associated with maritime exploration, commercial exploitation, coastal trading and navigation.
- Encourage learning and understanding about the historic heritage of the planning area, particularly as they relate to the historic theme 'Shipping along the Coast'.

Management strategies

- *Manage places and values of historical or cultural significance in accordance with the provisions of the Heritage Act, the Burra Charter of Australia ICOMOS, the provisions of the Heritage Act, the Historic Shipwrecks Act and Parks Victoria's Heritage Management Strategy.*
- *Continue to work collaboratively with Heritage Victoria in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding for the management of cultural heritage in Marine National Parks.*
- *Liaise with Heritage Victoria to document heritage values and assess the risks to those values. Ensure that such information is entered into Parks Victoria's Asset Management System.*
- *Prepare a heritage action statement for the planning area in close consultation with Heritage Victoria and community groups, to guide the management of the heritage places and values (appendix 4).*
- *Integrate the promotion of maritime and other heritage values related to the key historic theme 'Shipping along the Coast' into existing and new information, interpretation and education programs for marine and terrestrial areas of Wilsons Promontory (section 6.1).*

6 STRATEGIES FOR VISITORS

6.1 Information, interpretation and education

Providing information, interpretation and education can help orientate and inform visitors, increase visitor enjoyment and satisfaction, foster an understanding and appreciation of the planning area's special natural and cultural values, build understanding of management activities, and help visitors to experience the park in a safe and appropriate manner. Parks Victoria delivers information, interpretation and education to visitors by various means, including its website, ranger patrols, Marine Notes, signage, tourism brochures and other publications, displays, and licensed tour operators. These services may be developed and provided in collaboration with other agencies.

Having a representative system of Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries in Victoria presents a unique opportunity to educate visitors and the broader community about the features and benefits of a statewide system of marine protected areas. Initiatives to raise awareness and understanding of the system in a statewide context will be delivered, and a range of information, interpretation and education products specific to the key features of the planning area will also be provided.

There is considerable potential to raise public interest in and awareness of the planning area, and to promote appropriate opportunities to Victorian, interstate and overseas visitors. Parks Victoria's information and interpretation programs are integrated with statewide and regional marketing strategies of Tourism Victoria (e.g. Tourism Victoria 2002a, 2002b, 2004).

Pre-visit orientation information is available at accredited information centres and other local outlets on approaches to the planning area, including the Foster, Yanakie and Tidal River offices of Parks Victoria. Parks Victoria's website also supplies pre-visit orientation information to a wide range of visitors.

Additional orientation information is available in Marine Notes and on information panels at Tidal River, Refuge Cove, Five Mile Carpark

and Telegraph Saddle. Information for boat users is also presented on information panels at Port Welshpool, Port Albert, Toora Beach and Shallow Inlet, and boundary markers assist with orientation.

The Visitor Centre at Tidal River is the main site for the distribution of orientation and park information for both the marine and terrestrial protected areas, and is the major facility for contact between park staff and visitors.

Marine themes form a significant part of the Visitor Centre's interpretive displays, and popular Ranger-led activities such as 'rockpool rambles' are run during peak visitor times. There are opportunities for Indigenous Traditional Owners and private operators to be more involved in such activities in the planning area (sections 5.1 and 6.7).

Rangers and Fisheries Officers have direct contact with visitors and can supply orientation and regulatory information, and interpret features of the marine environment.

Appropriate educational visits to the planning area are encouraged and supported by a variety of education programs through the Education Centre at Tidal River, which is the only Parks Victoria Education Centre that focuses on marine education. A qualified teacher has been based at Tidal River since 1990, delivering formal programs and offering professional development for teachers, assistance in organising visits to the planning area, and assistance with curriculum development. Parks Victoria staff assist the Education Officer during peak school visitation periods. The minimal impact guidelines (Parks Victoria 2003c), available on the Parks Victoria website, www.parkweb.vic.gov.au, aim to minimise the potential impact of education and interpretation programs, which may involve trampling in the intertidal areas (section 6.5).

The booklet *Exploring Wilsons Promontory: a Guide to Visitor Services, Interpretation and Education* (CNR 1995) was prepared in 1995 to provide broad direction for Wilsons Promontory National Park, Marine Park and Marine Reserve. A three-year rolling information, interpretation and education plan is now required to reflect contemporary park

management practices and key directions in this area, including key messages for Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries, and the historic theme 'Shipping along the Coast'. This plan will include reference to the development of an education program to educate licensed tour operators, education providers and other visitors of the purpose and management objectives of the Special Protection Area surrounding Kanowna Island (section 6.3).

A Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries resource kit gives educators, students, community and Friends groups a comprehensive collection of materials for communicating the importance and values of marine national parks.

Aims

- Promote and encourage visitors' discovery, enjoyment and appreciation of the natural and cultural values of the planning area in a safe and appropriate manner through information, education and interpretation.
- Encourage public support for the planning area and management practices.
- Provide opportunities to learn about and understand the cultural and spiritual significance of the planning area to the Traditional Owners.
- Promote an awareness of past European cultural activities in the park.

Management strategies

- *Produce an integrated three-year rolling information, interpretation and education plan to provide direction for management of the planning area and adjoining Wilsons Promontory National Park.*
- *Provide and support high-quality opportunities for the range of user groups to discover, experience and understand the park's natural and cultural values, in accordance with table 3. Target visitors across the range of user groups, through a range of tourism, information, interpretation and education media.*
- *Deliver messages about the following natural values and themes:*
 - *the contribution of Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park to Victoria's system of Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries*
 - *biological communities with distinct biogeographic patterns (section 4.4)*
 - *fishing regulations in the marine park and marine reserve*
 - *marine pests*
 - *water quality and pollution*
 - *minimal impact use of coastal and marine environments.*
- *Promote greater public understanding and appreciation of, and respect for, Indigenous culture by incorporating information about Indigenous cultural lore, places and objects in information, interpretation and education programs, in accordance with the views of the Traditional Owners (sections 5.1 and 8.2).*
- *Provide appropriate opportunities and encourage and support relevant Indigenous communities to participate in developing and delivering information, interpretation and education services (sections 5.1 and 8.2).*
- *Where appropriate, use Indigenous language for natural features, plants and animals in interpretive material and signs.*
- *Provide visitor information, interpretation and education materials that promote greater public understanding and appreciation of post-settlement cultural heritage (section 5.2), including the key historic theme 'Shipping along the Coast'.*
- *Liaise with State and regional tourism authorities to ensure that the planning area is appropriately promoted in regional visitor information centres and State and regional tourism strategies.*
- *Update relevant Marine Note brochures and information panels in accordance with table 3.*
- *Develop an education program that specifically aims to educate Licensed Tour Operators, education providers and other visitors of the purpose and management objectives of the Special Protection Area surrounding Kanowna Island (section 6.7).*

TABLE 3 PROVISION OF VISITOR INFORMATION, INTERPRETATION AND EDUCATION

| SITE | MAIN FOCUS | FACILITY / SERVICE / TOOL | MANAGEMENT ACTION |
|----------------------------------|--|--|--|
| General | Pre-visit orientation information | Internet site ('Parkweb'), Accredited Information Centres | Maintain |
| Planning area | Orientation information, promotion of natural and cultural values and appropriate use | Guided tours by licensed tour operators | Liaise with licensed operators |
| | | Ranger patrols | Maintain |
| PV Foster office | Orientation information, fishing regulations, marine introduced pests, pollution, minimal-impact use | Information, interpretation and education programs | Develop and maintain |
| | | Ranger and Fisheries Officer patrols | Maintain, collaborate with Fisheries Victoria |
| Wilsons Promontory National Park | | | |
| Entrance Station, Yanakie | Basic orientation information | Marine Notes | Update and maintain |
| Visitor Centre, Tidal River | Basic orientation information | Staff/visitor interaction, Marine Notes | Update and maintain |
| | Park information | Information panels | Update and maintain |
| | Interpretation | Interpretation | Develop and maintain |
| | Contribution of Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park to the statewide system. | Audiovisual presentations, information, interpretation and education programs | Develop and maintain |
| | Marine habitats and communities | Audiovisual presentations, information panels, information, interpretation and education programs | Develop and maintain |
| | Indigenous culture | Ranger-led activities, information panels | Involve Indigenous people in all aspects of programs |
| | Maritime cultural heritage – including 'Shipping along the Coast' | Information panels, information, interpretation and education programs | Develop and maintain |
| | Fishing regulations | Marine Note, Ranger patrols, Fisheries patrols | Maintain |
| | Marine introduced pests | Information, interpretation and education programs, Ranger patrols | Develop and maintain |
| | Pollution | Information, interpretation and education programs, Ranger patrols | Develop and maintain |
| | Minimal-impact use | Information, interpretation and education programs, Ranger patrols | Develop and maintain |
| Education Centre, Tidal River | Marine education | Education programs, information displays, park visit assistance, curriculum development, Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries Resource Kit | Encourage use |

Table 3 (contd.)

| SITE | MAIN FOCUS | FACILITY / SERVICE / TOOL | MANAGEMENT ACTION |
|--|--|---|---------------------|
| Wilsons Promontory National Park | | | |
| Refuge Cove, Five Mile Carpark, Telegraph Saddle | Orientation and general Marine National Park information | Information panels, Marine Notes | Update and maintain |
| Whole of park (adjoining Marine National Park, marine park and marine reserve) | Fishing regulations, marine pests, pollution, minimal-impact use | Ranger Patrols Interpretation programs | Maintain |
| Boat Ramps outside planning area | | | |
| Port Welshpool, Port Albert, Toora Beach and Shallow Inlet boat ramps | Orientation information | Information panels | Update and maintain |

- *In conjunction with Fisheries Victoria, continue to provide information, interpretation and education material through land and water based patrols to achieve voluntary compliance of regulations, and where necessary enforcement.*
- *Integrate the Marine National Park, marine park and marine reserve into the high-standard marine education program offered from Tidal River by a qualified teacher, and promote the program to schools, teachers and students.*
- *Continue to allow sustainable educational use by school and community groups.*
- *Ensure school and formal interpretative groups adopt minimal impact guidelines.*

6.2 Access

Visitors can gain access to the planning area by boat or other craft, or by vehicle and then foot from within Wilsons Promontory National Park (section 7.2). Many boats from distant locations arrive in or pass through the planning area. The majority of visitors are from Melbourne, the Latrobe Valley or local areas.

Nearby boat ramps or beach launching areas are located at Norman Bay (Tidal River) (section 6.3), Sandy Point, Duck Point (Yanakie), Toora Beach, Port Welshpool and Port Albert. The *Gippsland Boating Coastal Action Plan* (GCB 2002b) aims to provide

direction for the location and scale of boating use and development on the Gippsland coast, including the planning area. In doing so, it identifies infrastructure and actions needed to implement this, and other aims.

Tidal River is only suitable as a launching site for very small boats (GCB 2002b) (sections 6.3 and 6.4). The *Wilsons Promontory National Park Management Plan* (Parks Victoria 2002a) does not make provision for additional boat launching facilities within the national park.

Sandy Point provides for the launching of small boats across the beach into Shallow Inlet (GCB 2002b). Yanakie and Toora Beach are local boat ramps providing boating access for part of the tidal cycle. The *Gippsland Boating Coastal Action Plan* (GCB 2002b) identifies developing Yanakie as a regional ramp that can service the needs of the boating community that frequent the isthmus of the Promontory on both its eastern and western side.

Both Port Welshpool and Port Albert are regional boating centres, providing all-tide ocean access for larger boats (GCB 2002b).

The choice of boat launching site often depends on the destination side of Wilsons Promontory. In some weather, access to the planning area for most vessels may be dangerous. Visitors must therefore familiarise themselves with the inherent and often

changing weather and sea conditions of the planning area (section 6.9).

All land-based visitors access the planning area from within Wilsons Promontory National Park, commonly from Tidal River. Carpark facilities and walking track access is provided at Tidal River, Telegraph Saddle, Five Mile Track, Squeaky Beach, Picnic Bay, Whisky Bay and Darby River. Management of these facilities is provided for in the *Wilsons Promontory National Park Management Plan* (Parks Victoria 2002a).

To protect significant natural values, the Wilsons Promontory National Park Management Plan (Parks Victoria 2002a) prohibits public access to all islands within the national park, except the beach areas on Great Glennie and Rabbit Islands. Consistent with this provision, access to all islands within the planning area will be restricted, excluding the beach areas on Great Glennie and Rabbit Islands. Access restrictions also apply to boating close to the Australian Fur Seal colony on Kanowna Island, and to personal water craft within Norman Bay (sections 3.2 and 6.3).

Historically, landings have been used as access points to and from the planning area and Wilsons Promontory National Park. Parts of the eastern landing continue to be used for management of the South East Point Lightstation precinct, although public access by boat is not permitted.

Aims

- Provide for the use and enjoyment of the planning area.
- Minimise the impact of access on natural and cultural values of the planning area.

Management strategies

- *Ensure that pre-visit and directional information is appropriate to enable safe and enjoyable access to the planning area (section 6.1).*
- *Liaise with appropriate recreational groups regarding regulations and seasonal restrictions on access (section 6.3).*
- *Ensure that access to the planning area is integrated with facilities and access*

provided within the adjacent Wilsons Promontory National Park.

- *Continue to prohibit public access to all Wilsons Promontory National Park islands within the planning area, except the beach areas on Great Glennie and Rabbit Islands.*
- *Continue to allow small watercraft to be launched at Norman Bay in Wilsons Promontory Marine Park, subject to permit conditions and the provision of appropriate signage and information (section 6.3).*

6.3 Recreational boating and surface water sports

Boating is a popular recreational activity within the planning area. The main associated activities are scuba diving and snorkelling (section 6.4), sightseeing, picnicking, camping aboard vessels, and fishing in the marine park and marine reserve (section 6.6). Sea-kayaking is also becoming an increasingly popular activity and is often associated with camping at designated remote campsite locations adjacent to the Wilsons Promontory shoreline. Other surface water sports include surfing, surf skiing, canoeing and water skiing (table 2, section 3.3). Most of these activities are concentrated close to Tidal River at Norman Bay (Wilsons Promontory Marine Park) and beaches further north.

Facilities for these activities are generally limited and are provided largely within Wilsons Promontory National Park (Parks Victoria 2002a). Navigational aids are located at Lighthouse Point, Sealers Cove, Refuge Cove, Waterloo Point, South East Point and Citadel Island (section 7.1).

State Environment Protection Policies prohibit vessel operators from discharging sewage, oil, garbage, sediment, litter or other wastes to surface waters in any Victorian State waters. While the EPA has primary responsibility for pollution management, Parks Victoria supports the provision of waste receiving and pump out facilities at marinas, ports, and other suitable sites.

As in all Victorian coastal waters, a boat speed limit of 5 knots applies to vessels (including PWCs) in specified circumstances (MSV 2003). Apart from boating restrictions within

the Special Protection Area (see below, and section 3.2), these speed restrictions are considered sufficient to minimise or avoid impacts on natural values (primarily roosting birds and Australian Fur Seals) and conflicts with other users. Parks Victoria works collaboratively with Marine Safety Victoria to ensure compliance with these regulations (section 8.3).

Small boats can be launched and landed at the northern end of Norman Bay when conditions are suitable, subject to a permit system. Boats (e.g. surf-skis, sea-kayaks) that do not require the aid of a vehicle and/or trailer in launching, and/or can be carried from nearby car parks within Wilsons Promontory National Park, do not require a permit.

The northern end of Norman Bay beach (incorporating Wilsons Promontory National Park to mean low water mark) is also popular for other surface water sports, including surfing, windsurfing, swimming and other shore-based activities (section 6.5). For safety reasons (section 6.9), and as a means of monitoring use and impacts, boat launching from this location has been controlled by a permit system for some time (Parks Victoria 2002a). To avoid conflicts with other users, permits are not issued for the launching of personal water craft (PWC). PWCs touring the coast may, however, enter Norman Bay, subject to speed restrictions under the Marine Act. Bathing is also not permitted in Norman Bay between launching signs, when the signs are displayed and boats are being launched or retrieved (section 6.5).

Conflicts have occurred in the past in Norman Bay between water skiers and/or operators of PWCs, and other visitors (e.g. surfing, surf skiing, canoeing, swimming) (DCE 1991). The permit system for vessel launching, and the Marine Act provisions restricting vessels to a maximum speed of 5 knots within 200 metres from the shore, are considered sufficient to minimise future conflicts in Norman Bay. Water skiing and use of PWCs in Refuge Cove have also led to conflict with other users of Refuge Cove. Similarly, compliance with this speed restriction is considered sufficient to minimise future conflicts in Refuge Cove.

The Wilsons Promontory coastline is a popular recreational boating attraction, with Refuge Cove being a significant destination and safe

anchorage for boats of various sizes. It provides for unique boat-based camping opportunities, and is a popular site for exploring the planning area and surrounding national park. During busy periods there may be up to 30 vessels at any one time within the cove, although four to six boats is more common. Boat-based visitors may camp on board their vessel within Wilsons Promontory Marine Park, or at a designated site on shore in Wilsons Promontory National Park (Parks Victoria 2002a). At present a permit is required only for camping on shore. However, because of the popularity of the site, increased visitation could warrant instituting a permit system for boat-based camping. This will be monitored over time.

Boats using Refuge Cove may cause anchor damage to seagrass communities, the introduction of marine pests, and damage to vegetation from stern lines (in the adjoining National Park). Monitoring is therefore required to ensure such activities do not compromise park values (section 4.4). The *Gippsland Boating Coastal Action Plan* (GCB 2002b) suggests that permanent swing moorings should be considered in Refuge Cove for safety reasons and to limit anchor dragging. However, permanent moorings would significantly reduce the aesthetic values of the area and would be costly to install and maintain in such a remote location. Furthermore, the benefits to park values are not clear, and other solutions may achieve the same outcome. Nevertheless, permanent swing moorings will be considered as one of the many potential options for managing boating activity and protecting natural values within Refuge Cove.

The Australian Fur Seal colony at Kanowna Island and Anderson Islets, and the haul-out sites at Norman Island, are susceptible to disturbance from boating activity, particularly during the breeding season (section 4.4). A Special Protection Area has therefore been designated around Kanowna Island to restrict the approach of motorised and non-motorised vessels to these areas (table 1 and figure 3). In this Special Protection Area, motorised and non-motorised vessels, including PWCs and sea-kayaks, are prohibited from:

- within 200 m of Kanowna Island from November to January (inclusive), except as

otherwise indicated by a permit or authority (section 6.7)

- within 50 m of Kanowna Island from February to October (inclusive).

Licensed tour operators may be permitted to access the Special Protection Area under certain conditions (section 6.7).

To further inform management of the Australian Fur Seal colony on Kanowna Island, an integrated research project will be developed to assess appropriate and sustainable visitation to Kanowna Island (section 4.4). Furthermore, an education program will be developed to educate licensed tour operators, education providers and other visitors of the purpose and management objectives of the Special Protection Area surrounding Kanowna Island (section 6.1).

Sea-bird breeding colonies on islands are also susceptible to disturbance throughout the year. To protect the sea-bird breeding colonies, the Special Protection Area also applies to accessing all Wilsons Promontory National Park islands within the planning area, except the beach areas on Rabbit and Great Glennie Islands (table 1 and section 6.2).

Non-motorised water craft may be used in all areas of the planning area, except in the area north of Fifth Ramp on Norman Bay during peak season (Saturday of November Melbourne Cup weekend until 30 April) and within the Special Protection Area during the times specified in table 1 (Parks Victoria 2002a).

Marine mammal viewing occurs occasionally in the park, usually by independent boat operators taking advantage of chance encounters with whales or dolphins. Under the Wildlife Act and the Wildlife (Whale) Regulations 1998, recreational vessels and PWCs must not approach within 100 metres of any whale or dolphin, while a minimum distance of 30 metres applies to swimmers and 50 metres to people on surfboards. The *Australian National Guidelines for Whale and Dolphin Watching 2005* (Australian Government 2005) also provides advice on watching whales and dolphins in the wild (section 4.4). Other conditions apply to licensed tour operators and commercial vessels (sections 6.7 and 7.1).

Aims

- Provide opportunities for recreational boating and appropriate surface water sports while protecting natural and cultural values.
- Promote safe boating and water safety within the planning area.
- Provide opportunities for marine mammal observation while ensuring their long-term protection.

Management strategies

- *Permit boating and surface water sports in the planning area in accordance with tables 1 and 2, and the 5 knot speed restriction within:*
 - 50 m of a swimmer
 - 100 m of a vessel or buoy with a diver below signal
 - 200 m of the shoreline
 - 300 m of a whale or dolphin.
- *Incorporate information about boating and associated activities into information, interpretation and education material (section 6.1).*
- *Encourage safe and appropriate boating practices in the planning area through information, interpretation and education programs (sections 6.1 and 6.9).*
- *Prohibit the installation of infrastructure, including jetties, groynes, boat ramps or permanent moorings, except those required for environmental protection, navigation, and/or essential boundary identification.*
- *Continue to allow vessel launching at the northern end of Norman Bay, subject to permit conditions, access and public safety, and provide appropriate signage and information, in accordance with the management plan for Wilsons Promontory National Park.*
- *Continue to prohibit the launching of personal water craft from Norman Bay.*
- *Continue to provide for boat-based camping within the planning area. Monitor levels of use, particularly at Refuge Cove, and continue to integrate*

management of the Refuge Cove boat-based camping area with the permit system for overnight hike camping at Wilsons Promontory National Park.

- *Through patrol recording, analysis and questionnaires, establish vessel visitation levels, vessel type and stay durations at Refuge Cove for future management.*
- *Investigate possible impacts associated with boating in Refuge Cove, including mechanical damage from anchors (section 4.4), the introduction of marine pests (section 4.6) and damage to on-shore vegetation.*
- *For the protection of the Australian Fur Seal colony and in accordance with the Special Protection Area (table 1, figure 3), restrict access by non-motorised and motorised boats from:*
 - *within 200 m of Kanowna Island from November to January (inclusive), except as otherwise indicated by a permit or other authority*
 - *within 50 m of Kanowna Island from February to October (inclusive).*
- *Develop an integrated research project to assess appropriate and sustainable boat-based visitation to Kanowna Island (section 4.4).*
- *Develop an education program that specifically aims to educate licensed tour operators, education providers and other visitors of the purpose and management objectives of the Special Protection Area surrounding Kanowna Island (section 6.1).*
- *Continue to restrict access to all islands within the planning area, except the beach areas on Rabbit and Great Glennie Islands (figure 2).*
- *Permit surface water sports, including the use of surfboards, surfskis, sailboards, kayaks and canoes, at all beaches, except for the area north of Fifth Ramp at Norman Bay, from Saturday of the November Melbourne Cup weekend until 30 April inclusive and between signs when vessels are being launched or retrieved.*
- *Actively enforce established vessel speed and distance restrictions under the Marine Act and the National Parks Act, to*

assist in the minimisation of potential disturbance to flora, fauna and visitors, particularly at Norman Bay, Refuge Cove and Kanowna Island.

- *Continue to ensure that appropriate staff are authorised under the Marine Act.*
- *Liaise with Victoria Water Police and Fisheries Victoria to implement the 5 knot speed restriction in order to protect park values and visitor safety.*

6.4 Diving and snorkelling

Snorkelling and scuba diving enable visitors to experience underwater habitats and view species and habitats that are difficult to observe from the surface, particularly smaller or cryptic animals such as seahorses, pipefish, sea urchins, nudibranchs, sponges, octopus and cuttlefish.

The waters of the planning area offer a variety of outstanding locations for diving and snorkelling. Dives generally range in depth from 2 to 50 metres. Thirty-four dive sites are described in detail in the guidebook *Down Under at the Prom* (O'Toole and Turner 1990). Opportunities for shore-based scuba diving within the planning area are limited, especially because of the area's remoteness and limited access from the shore. However, there are many boat-based diving opportunities.

Access for shore-based scuba diving is difficult in all areas except Pillar Point. The nearest tank-filling facility is at Inverloch, but divers are permitted to operate tank-filling compressors at a specified location at Tidal River, and the northern end of the north beach at Refuge Cove (Parks Victoria 2002a). Shore-based snorkelling is popular along Pillar Point from either Norman or Squeaky Beach, and along Leonard Point from Picnic Bay.

Seasonal factors play a significant role in dive opportunities within the planning area. Prevailing winds are from the west, and during the winter months when water is colder, water turbidity significantly limits dive opportunities on the western coast. Diving is often possible on the eastern coast when weather conditions are not conducive to diving on the western coast. Pillar Point may be a suitable location for a self-guided underwater swim. Fixed

structures that define such an underwater swim will not be permitted.

Potential impacts associated with diving include anchor damage (section 4.4), marine pest introduction (section 4.6), seabed disturbance from fins, intertidal trampling, illegal taking of flora and fauna (section 6.6) and the removal of artefacts or other disturbance to shipwrecks and other cultural sites (sections 5.1 and 5.2). Educating divers about minimal-impact practices, particularly those new to these activities, will help minimise impacts and assist with management of the planning area.

Divers should refer to the Dive Industry Victoria Association (DIVA) *Code of Practice for Commercial Providers of Recreational Snorkelling & Scuba Diving Services in Victoria* (DIVA 2004) or the Scuba Divers Federation of Victoria (SDFV) *Codes of Practice: General Operating Guidelines for Recreational Scuba Diving and Related Activities* (SDFV 2005). Snorkellers should refer to the *Snorkelling, Scuba Diving, and Wildlife Swims – Adventure Activity Standards* (ORC 2004 at www.orc.org.au).

The SDFV Codes of Practice include a *Code of Practice for Boat Launch and Retrieval at Tidal River (Wilsons Prom)* (SDFV 2005). For safety reasons (section 6.9), and as a means of monitoring use and impacts, boat launching from this location has been controlled by a permit system for some time (section 6.3). Divers launching boats at Norman Bay, Tidal River, must adhere to permit conditions, and are encouraged to adhere to the SDFV / Code of Practice.

Collaboration with the dive industry and education of users will help to minimise impacts from diving, and to increase awareness and understanding of the value of the planning area. Divers need to be aware of the no-take fishing provisions in the planning area and can also assist with the detection of unrecorded cultural places and objects and the presence of introduced marine pests (section 4.6) and other threatening processes. Parks Victoria will continue to support SDFV, dive clubs, and industry representatives to develop codes of practice that promote environmentally responsible diving practices.

Scuba divers diving from boats anchored outside the seasonal exclusion zones around Kanowna Island (table 1) may approach closer to these islands provided that they are under water and observe any other restrictions applying to approaching marine mammals (section 4.4).

Aim

- Provide opportunities for diving and snorkelling in the planning area while protecting natural and cultural values.

Management strategies

- *Continue to encourage visitors to explore the planning area by diving and snorkelling.*
- *Investigate possibilities for the Tidal River store/café to provide a service for the hire of snorkelling equipment and dive tank filling. Implement these services subject to commercial viability and existing infrastructure functionality.*
- *Integrate minimal-impact messages into existing information, interpretation and education programs (section 6.1).*
- *Promote compliance of snorkellers and recreational scuba divers with relevant codes of practice and Adventure Activity Standards.*
- *Support dive clubs and industry representatives to develop codes of practice that promote environmentally responsible diving practices.*
- *Encourage divers with a permit to launch boats at Norman Bay, Tidal River, to adhere to the SDFV ‘Code of Practice for Boat Launch and Retrieval at Tidal River’ (section 6.3).*
- *Provide information to park visitors describing potential dive sites and marine life occurring within the park (section 6.1).*
- *Encourage divers and snorkellers to participate in Reef Watch and other community-based marine monitoring programs (section 8.2).*
- *Encourage divers to ensure that diving equipment is kept free from marine pests (section 4.6).*

- *Investigate options for a self-guided underwater swim at Pillar Point, supported by off-site information.*

6.5 Swimming and shore-based activities

Wilson's Promontory Marine National Park includes intertidal areas as far as the mean high water mark. However, the landward boundaries of Wilson's Promontory Marine Park and Wilson's Promontory Marine Reserve are the mean low water mark, so the adjoining intertidal areas are within Wilson's Promontory National Park and are therefore covered by the management plan for the Wilson's Promontory National Park (Parks Victoria 2002a).

Sunbathing, nature observation, walking, rockhopping and climbing, and picnicking, are some of the potential activities within the intertidal areas of Wilson's Promontory Marine National Park.

Unless adequately managed, trampling by visitors and other potentially damaging shore-based activities could threaten the natural and cultural values of intertidal areas (sections 4.4, 5.1 and 5.2). Although current impacts associated with shore-based activities in the planning area appear minimal, constant monitoring will be required. Minimal Impact Education/Interpretation Guidelines (Parks Victoria 2003c) aim to minimise the potential impact of education and interpretation programs (section 6.1).

Swimming and water sports (section 6.3) are particularly popular at Norman Bay within Wilson's Promontory Marine Park.

Potential conflicts with other uses in Norman Bay, especially boat launching and landing, will continue to be managed jointly with the management of Wilson's Promontory National Park (section 6.3).

Surfing is also popular at Squeaky Beach, Picnic Bay, Whisky Beach and Darby River, and swimming occurs at all accessible beaches. Safety is an issue in the more remote locations (section 6.9).

Shore-based diving (section 6.4) and rock fishing (section 6.6) are popular activities in and adjoining the marine park, especially at Picnic Point, South Picnic Bay and Pillar Point. Little shore-based diving takes place in

the Marine National Park because of the difficulty in accessing the shore.

The collection of shells or other living or dead organisms is prohibited within the planning area, including the intertidal areas of Wilson's Promontory Marine National Park and Wilson's Promontory National Park adjoining the marine park and marine reserve.

The lighting of fires within Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries, including any beaches or islands, is not permitted, except on board a vessel that is seaward of the high water mark.

Dogs are not permitted within the adjacent Wilson's Promontory National Park, and therefore have no access to the planning area through the national park.

Dogs are permitted to be aboard vessels within the planning area, provided they are confined to a vessel and are under control.

Aim

- Provide for appropriate shore-based activities while protecting natural and cultural values.

Management strategies

- *Permit shore-based activities in accordance with table 2.*
- *Manage shore-based activities to reduce impacts on intertidal reefs and minimise damage associated with trampling, through:*
 - *promoting use of Parks Victoria's Minimal Impact Guidelines including avoiding unnecessary trampling, replacing rocks in their original location and not disturbing or damaging flora or fauna*
 - *conditions placed on tour operator permits*
 - *regular patrols during popular periods and times to encourage and affirm appropriate visitor use.*
- *Integrate minimal-impact messages for sensitive intertidal areas into existing information, interpretation and education programs (section 6.1).*

- *Continue to restrict swimming, bathing and other shore-based activities between the vessel launching signs at Norman Bay when signs are displayed (section 6.3).*
- *Monitor impacts from trampling in high use and sensitive intertidal areas of the Marine National Park and take appropriate action to minimise any impacts.*
- *Minimise impacts on cultural heritage places and objects within the intertidal areas of the Marine National Park.*
- *Allow dogs in the planning area if confined to a vessel.*

6.6 Recreational fishing

All fishing is prohibited in Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park. Severe penalties apply under the National Parks Act for all forms of fishing in, as well as the taking or damaging of flora, fauna or objects from, Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park.

Recreational fishing (including spear fishing) is permitted in Wilsons Promontory Marine Park and Marine Reserve, subject to the Fisheries Act and regulations. Commercial fishing is also permitted in the marine park and marine reserve (section 7.1).

Government acceptance of the ECC's final recommendations (Government of Victoria 2002) has resulted in further opportunities for fishing in the marine park and marine reserve, including the former 'line fishing only' zones and the area around the Glennie Group of Islands.

Recreational fishing occurs from both the shore and vessels, and is mostly targeted at fin fish species. Divers also target Black and Green Lip Abalone and Southern Rock Lobster.

The majority of fishers access the planning area from Tidal River and walking tracks further to the north, or by boat from Port Welshpool (section 6.2).

Since July 1999, a recreational fishing licence has been required for all forms of recreational fishing (including line, net, yabby, spear fishing, bait and shellfish collection) in all Victorian marine, estuarine and fresh waters.

Parks Victoria works collaboratively with Department of Primary Industries – Fisheries Victoria to ensure compliance with relevant legislation and regulations. Parks Victoria Rangers and Fisheries Victoria Fisheries Officers seek to achieve voluntary compliance with regulations, and where necessary enforcement, through the *East Region Compliance Plan* (Parks Victoria 2005b).

Fishcare is a program of community education and participation activities to promote sustainable fishing and care for fishing environments. Parks Victoria works collaboratively with Fishcare to promote responsible fishing behaviour and sustainable fishing practices.

Prior to proclamation of the marine park and marine reserve in the 1980s, these areas were occasionally venues for organised fishing competitions. Because of the high potential for detrimental impacts to sensitive natural values and in accordance with the proposed plan (DCE 1991), fishing competitions have not been permitted in Wilsons Promontory Marine Park or Marine Reserve.

Angling competitions are generally considered incompatible with the aims and objectives of areas managed under the National Parks Act. Wilsons Promontory Marine Park and Marine Reserve are not ideal locations for angling competitions, however proposals for such events may be considered. Spear fishing competitions, especially where intensive fishing of reef-dependent species occurs, may remove local populations of adult fish and have irreversible effects on recruitment rates (Nevill 2005). Spear fishing competitions will therefore continue to be prohibited from the planning area.

Organisers of angling fishing competitions in Wilsons Promontory Marine Park and Marine Reserve require a permit issued under the National Parks Act with specified conditions to minimise impacts to natural and cultural values, and recreational opportunities (section 7.2).

New or emerging fisheries within the marine park or marine reserve also have the potential to impact on sensitive species, particularly reef-dependent species. Compliance with legislation is essential to ensure that natural processes in the planning area can continue

with minimal human interference, and to ensure that particular species are not exploited in the marine park or marine reserve.

Aim

- Provide opportunities for sustainable recreational fishing while minimising impacts on the marine park and marine reserve.

Management strategies

- *Ensure compliance with the prohibition of all forms of fishing and resource harvesting within Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park.*
- *Work collaboratively with Fisheries Victoria to manage fishing in Wilsons Promontory Marine Park and Marine Reserve in accordance with the Fisheries Act and regulations.*
- *Raise visitor awareness of legal requirements regarding the collection of bait, bag limits, seasons and licence requirements.*
- *Work with angling clubs and interest groups to maintain recreational fishing opportunities while minimising impacts on the planning area's values.*
- *Support the objectives of Fisheries Victoria in the ecologically sustainable management of fishing activities.*
- *Support the Fishcare program to promote responsible fishing behaviour and sustainable fishing practices.*
- *Liaise with Fisheries Victoria in the regulation and management of any angling completions, and new or emerging fisheries that might affect the marine park, particularly as they relate to reef-dependent species.*
- *Consider applications for angling competitions on a case-by-case basis, and manage such events to minimise impacts to marine ecological communities, ecological processes, and individual species (section 7.1).*
- *Continue to prohibit spear fishing competitions in the planning area.*

- *Ensure that information, interpretation and education programs incorporate information relating to recreational fishing provisions, including boundaries between the Marine National Park 'no-fishing' area and the marine park and marine reserve (section 6.1).*

6.7 Tourism services

Parks Victoria's licensed tour operators play a key role in nature-based tourism in Victoria by offering guided park tours and supported recreation activities, and information that promotes park values and appropriate use.

Activities in the planning area offered by licensed tour operators include boating, diving, sightseeing and wildlife viewing, surf schools and sea-kayaking. Most operators are not locally based, and their clients come mainly from the Melbourne metropolitan area.

Access to the planning area for licensed tour operators is often limited by adverse weather or sea conditions, and this has restricted the number of operators working in the area.

The activities of licensed tour operators are managed by licence conditions that detail access, permitted activities and site-specific restrictions. Site-specific restrictions include reference to the distance restrictions for the Special Protection Area surrounding Kanowna Island (section 6.3).

Subject to the demonstration of their ability to meet specified criteria in relation to environmental awareness and protection of the Australian Fur Seal colony on Kanowna Island, and the ability to provide an appropriate and quality interpretive experience to tour participants, licensed tour operators may be permitted to approach closer than 200 m during the breeding season (November to January inclusive). This provision has the potential to create an enhanced level of visitor, community and tourism industry awareness and advocacy of this issue, via the development of a managed and sustainable tourism product. This product (the managed visit during the breeding season) has the potential to be a spectacular and engaging component of boat tours to the area. An education program focusing on licensed tour operators, recreational boaters, education providers and other visitors will be developed

to complement this provision (section 6.1). Operators must also adhere to industry standards for safety (section 6.9).

Tourism Alliance Victoria is a membership-based industry association with a representative and professional development role for tourism businesses. Parks Victoria works collaboratively with Tourism Alliance Victoria in administering the Tour Operator Licensing system across Victoria's public land estate, including the planning area.

There are opportunities for relevant Indigenous communities to add to the tourism experience in the planning area by developing and delivering interpretive and educational tours on Indigenous cultural heritage and values.

Aims

- Encourage the provision of appropriate tourism services to improve the quality and range of recreational experiences available to visitors.
- Ensure that licensed tour operators recognise and respect the natural and cultural values of the planning area, including Indigenous cultural heritage values.

Management strategies

- *Ensure all tour operators using the park are licensed and promote awareness of Adventure Activity Standards and Minimal Impact Guidelines.*
- *Encourage and assist licensed tour operators to provide a range of appropriate activities that enhance the experience of visitors and are compatible with the protection of natural and cultural values.*
- *Work collaboratively with licensed tour operators and Tourism Alliance Victoria to ensure:*
 - *the provision of a high-quality service*
 - *that activities adhere to minimal-impact practices as specified in the licence conditions*
 - *that information conveyed to visitors is consistent with the objectives for the planning area.*

- *Continue to work with licensed tour operators and the tourism industry to assist with the delivery of appropriate park information.*
- *Permit licensed tour operators to access the Special Protection Area closer than 200 m around Kanowna Island during the breeding season (sections 4.4 and 6.3), subject to the:*
 - *demonstration of their conduct in relation to the environmental protection of the Australian Fur Seal colony on Kanowna Island*
 - *demonstration of an appropriate and quality interpretive experience provided to tour participants.*
- *Encourage licensed Indigenous tour operators to add to the tourism experience by developing and delivering interpretive and educational tours on indigenous cultural heritage, cultural lore and customs.*
- *Monitor licensed tour activities to ensure that park and reserve values are not compromised, and amend licence conditions if necessary.*

6.8 Aircraft

Domestic flight charters and sightseeing tours are offered in the local area. Light aircraft and helicopters have flown over the planning area and this experience has been used for opportunistic wildlife sightings. Under the Wildlife (Whale) Regulations, fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters must stay a minimum distance of 300 m from whales. Restrictions also apply to flying heights under Commonwealth legislation.

There is the potential for low-flying aircraft to disturb seals and sea birds within the planning area, particularly the breeding colony of Australian Fur Seals on Kanowna Island (section 4.4). 'Fly Neighbourly' agreements can specify appropriate flying times, behaviours and activities to ensure the natural values of the planning area and experiences of visitors are protected, whilst continuing to provide opportunities for flying activities. Such an agreement may be negotiated for the planning area if the level of low-flying aircraft

usage over the planning area deems this necessary.

Fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters are not permitted to take off or land in the planning area, except for emergency response and management purposes.

Aim

- Monitor and minimise the impact of fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters on the natural values of the planning area.

Management strategies

- *Monitor the level of activity and use by fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters, and implement 'Fly Neighbourly' agreements if required.*
- *Liaise with scenic flight operators and Air Services Australia as necessary to encourage sensitive flight practices over the planning area.*
- *Prohibit the landing of fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters in the planning area, except for emergency response and management purposes.*

6.9 Public safety

Because of the nature of the coastline and the changeable and often severe weather and sea conditions in the area, there are inherent dangers associated with water-based activities. Numerous emergency incidents have occurred within the planning area including shipwrecks, vessels in distress or sinking, stranded vessels, injured and trapped fishers, diving incidents, and drownings and near-drownings. Public information and education are one of the most effective ways to promote safety (section 6.1). Safety messages are presented to visitors through signs, Marine Notes and interaction with Rangers.

In general, the planning area is not safe for inexperienced visitors. Strong winds, difficult currents and tides, slippery rocks, venomous fauna, large waves and shipping traffic are potential dangers.

The exposed coastal environments around Wilsons Promontory are among the most dangerous areas in Victoria for boating and associated activities, particularly during strong and rapidly changing sea conditions. A survey

of Victorian beaches in 1996 rated their safety as being in one of four hazard categories: safest, moderately safe, low safety and least safe (Short 1996). Beach hazard ratings vary for the planning area depending on the location, although the relative risk at each site will also vary depending on circumstances such as weather and sea conditions, and tidal movements. Visitors need to be aware of safety risks and familiarise themselves with the specific dangers associated with their chosen activity in the planning area before arriving.

All powered recreational vessel operators operating in State waters are required to have a current licence. Recreational boating accidents are highest in Victoria during January, and most fatalities are associated with aluminium dinghies (MSV 2003). Marine Safety Victoria conducts safety and awareness programs for recreational boat users, and the Victorian Recreational Boating Safety Handbook contains necessary safety information and outlines the requirements for operating a recreational vessel in Victoria (MSV 2003) (section 6.3).

The *Admiralty Sailing Directions Australian Pilot* charts recommend anchorages within the planning area at Norman Bay, Oberon Bay, Home Cove (Waterloo Bay), Refuge Cove, Sealers Cove and Miranda Bay (UKHO 1999) (section 7.1).

The responsibilities for responding to emergency incidents in Victoria and Victorian waters are outlined in the *Emergency Management Act 1986* (Vic.). Parks Victoria is not the lead agency for most emergency response situations. Instead it supports other agencies, including the Department of Sustainability and Environment, Marine Safety Victoria, the Country Fire Authority, the State Emergency Service and Victoria Police, in emergency incidents where required (section 8.3).

Relevant agencies respond to incidents within the park in accordance with the Municipal Emergency Response Plan. Parks Victoria's response to emergency incidents during normal operating activities within the park will be guided by the *Wilsons Promontory National Park Emergency Management Plan* (Parks Victoria 2005c). This Emergency Management Plan defines emergency response arrangements

for all potential incidents within the planning area.

The waters of Wilsons Promontory Marine Park between Entrance Point and Five Mile Beach are part of the Port of Corner Inlet and Port Albert. Under the *Port Services Act 1995* (Vic.), Gippsland Ports is the Local Authority with respect to State waters for the port, and manages the safety and environment of the port consistent with the Safety and Environment Management Plan (Gippsland Ports 2005b).

To assist in achieving safe practice, Adventure Activity Standards are being developed by the outdoor recreation industry for all adventure activities, including diving and snorkelling (e.g. ORC 2004) (section 6.4). The Outdoor Recreation Centre will facilitate the development and update of these standards. Visitors are encouraged to comply with these standards, or other standards relevant to their activity such as the Scuba Diving Federation of Victoria codes of practice (section 6.4), and undertake the required training and accreditation before undertaking their chosen activity within the planning area.

Surf Lifesaving Victoria maintains an Inflatable Rescue Boat with trained lifesavers providing surf lifesaving services on Norman Bay over the Christmas holiday period.

Aims

- Promote visitor safety and awareness of safety issues and risks within the planning area associated with access and use.
- Promote and observe safe practices, and cooperate with emergency services.

Management strategies

- *Increase visitor awareness of safety issues and potential hazards in the planning*

area, including the dynamic nature of tides and currents, through the use of Marine Notes, the Tidal River Information Centre, Ranger interaction, information signage and ParkWeb.

- *Encourage visitors to comply with Adventure Activity Standards as developed by the Outdoor Recreation Centre, and appropriate codes of practice relevant to their activity, including those developed for diving and snorkelling (section 6.4).*
- *Cooperate with and support responsible agencies, including local Victoria Police, ambulance officers, Coastal Patrol, Marine Safety Victoria and other emergency services, in emergency response and to implement the Wilsons Promontory National Park Emergency Management Plan.*
- *Liaise with South Gippsland Shire Council to ensure that Municipal Emergency Response Plans make adequate provision for likely incidents in the planning area.*
- *Regularly review the Wilsons Promontory National Park Emergency Management Plan to ensure that protocols are identified to address all potential incidents within the planning area.*
- *Ensure that relevant Parks Victoria staff have adequate levels of training in emergency procedures.*
- *Liaise with Marine Safety Victoria and Gippsland Ports on input into the planning and implementation of marine safety initiatives within the planning area and adjacent waters, including the implementation of the Safety and Environment Management Plan for the Port of Corner Inlet and Port Albert.*

7 STRATEGIES FOR AUTHORISED AND ADJACENT USES

7.1 Authorised uses

Subject to specified conditions to minimise impacts on natural and cultural values, and public safety, a number of uses and activities may be permitted in the planning area.

The *Admiralty Sailing Directions Australian Pilot* charts recommend anchorages within the planning area at Norman Bay, Oberon Bay, Home Cove (Waterloo Bay), Refuge Cove, Sealers Cove and Miranda Bay (UKHO 1999). Some smaller ships and many recreational yachts and other vessels use Refuge Cove as an anchorage and scenic stopover, and to a lesser extent Oberon Bay and Home Cove. However, as no anchorage is considered safe in all conditions, it is the responsibility of each vessel's Master to judge whether such anchorages are safe for their vessel. Considerations include prevailing and expected weather, sea state, tidal conditions, and vessel draft in relation to available depth, anchor characteristics and holding power of the seabed type.

Marine Safety Victoria is considering declaring some of the recommended anchorages in the planning area as 'safe havens' for the purposes of regulating commercial vessel activities (S. Turner, pers. comm. 2005). Safe havens are applicable only to Class C vessels (i.e. trading or fishing vessels restricted to offshore operations within a range of 30 miles from sheltered waters or a safe haven) and allow such vessels to extend their operating range along the coastline without unduly compromising safety.

Shipping accidents because of collision could have harmful impacts on natural and cultural values of the planning area. The Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea 1972 (Collision Regulations) identifies an Inshore Traffic Zone in the southern end of Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park (figure 2). Westbound shipping traffic must navigate to the north of Forty Foot Rocks, whereas eastbound traffic navigate to the south of Rodondo Island and the Moncoeur Group of Islands (Admiralty Chart AUS 802). Rule 10 (Traffic Separation Schemes) of the Collision Regulations applies. The Collision

Regulations have been designed to prevent the collision of large commercial vessels at sea, and have been adopted into Victorian law under the Marine Act and into Commonwealth law under the *Navigation Act 1901* (Cwlth).

Circumstances may arise (e.g. weather, sea state, material state of vessel, competency and capacity of crew, etc.) where a vessel undertaking the right of innocent passage through Australia's territorial seas will seek to stop and anchor in cases of *force majeure* or distress.

Vessels carrying a priority species (as defined under the Fisheries Act) are not permitted in Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park unless travelling by the shortest practicable route from a point outside the park to another point outside the park. In the event of an emergency (*force majeure*) such vessels may need to shelter in the park where there is not alternative.

Navigational aids and associated infrastructure are located within the adjoining Wilsons Promontory National Park at Lighthouse Point, Sealers Cove, Refuge Cove, Waterloo Point, South East Point and Citadel Island. Maintained by Marine Safety Victoria, access is provided to most of these locations through the planning area. However, with the exception of South East Point and Citadel Island (maintained by Parks Victoria and AMSA respectively), permission is required from the Secretary to DSE, with conditions to minimise effects on the planning area and visitors for maintenance operations and access through the planning area. Should new technology render certain navigational aids redundant, access may no longer be required through the planning area.

Commercial fishing is permitted in Wilsons Promontory Marine Park and Wilsons Promontory Marine Reserve, subject to licence. Fishing is exclusively boat-based, and targets Green and Black Lip Abalone, Southern Rock Lobster and various fin fish and demersal species. The provisions of the Fisheries Act apply, and Fisheries Victoria has the primary role for ensuring that fisheries are sustainable (section 8.3).

Petroleum extraction, exploratory drilling, mineral exploration and mining, and invasive searching for or extraction of stone and other materials, are prohibited in the planning area under the National Parks Act. Petroleum exploration, such as seismic survey, from an aircraft or from a vessel, that is carried out in a manner that does not detrimentally affect the seabed or any flora or fauna of the planning area may be allowed with the consent of the Minister. However the Government has recently announced that it will not release any further areas in Victoria that contain Marine National Parks or Marine Sanctuaries for petroleum exploration. There is no petroleum exploration permit over the planning area. Construction of pipelines or seafloor cables may be permitted with the consent of the Minister in some circumstances.

Protected areas are generally avoided as locations for Defence Force training exercises, although they occasionally host search and rescue, field navigation and incident response activities. Activities are subject to a permit with conditions and are undertaken in accordance with the Australian Defence Forces Maritime Activities Environmental Management Plan to ensure that planning area values are protected.

All research and monitoring in the planning area by external organisations or individuals requires a research permit under the National Parks Act. Permits are issued by DSE.

Subject to a permit issued under the National Parks Act specifying conditions for minimising impacts to natural and cultural values and public safety, organised events and functions may occur within the planning area. Potential events may include surfing and sailing competitions.

Parks Victoria recognises the significant role that the filming and photography industry plays in the social and economic well-being of the community; and in providing for these activities seeks to ensure protection of the natural and cultural values of the planning area. This is achieved through a permit system for all filming and photography conducted as part of a trade or a business. Amateur photographers or people taking film or video for personal or hobby interest do not require a permit.

Aim

- Manage authorised uses and permitted activities in accordance with the National Parks Act, and minimise their impact on park values.

Management strategies

- *Manage authorised uses in accordance with the requirements of legislation and Parks Victoria's operational policies.*
- *Monitor authorised activities to ensure that conditions of authorisations are met. Assess the effectiveness of conditions of authorisations in protecting the planning area and seek review of authorisations if necessary, to arrest impacts.*
- *Liaise with Marine Safety Victoria regarding potential implications of the creation of 'safe havens' for commercial vessels in the planning area.*
- *Liaise with Marine Safety Victoria regarding current and future arrangements for the Inshore Traffic Zone. Encourage the movement of the zone to an area further south, outside the existing Marine National Park boundary.*
- *Promote the requirement for vessel operators carrying priority species on board their vessel, who enter or shelter within the park in an emergency to notify Fisheries Victoria, where possible.*
- *Work collaboratively with Marine Safety Victoria in obtaining permission from the Secretary to DSE for access and maintenance to navigational aids and associated infrastructure within the planning area and adjacent Wilsons Promontory National Park.*
- *Liaise with Marine Safety Victoria and AMSA to minimise potential impacts to the planning area associated with accessing navigational aids and associated infrastructure in the adjacent Wilsons Promontory National Park.*
- *Permit events and functions that:*
 - *do not impact on the natural and cultural values of the planning area*
 - *do not unduly disturb or disadvantage other visitors*

- *do not unduly increase liability risk exposure*
- *can be appropriately managed with available resources.*
- *Support events or functions that provide community benefits or complement values of the planning area.*
- *Ensure all events include acknowledgement of, and where possible involve Traditional Owners.*
- *Ensure relevant Indigenous communities are consulted and involved in the planning of relevant events.*
- *Manage filming and photography in accordance with Parks Victoria operational policies.*
- *Permit Defence Force adventure training or field navigation exercises in the planning area in accordance with Parks Victoria's operational policy and relevant permit conditions.*

7.2 Boundaries and adjacent uses

Boundaries

As fishing is prohibited in Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park, but permitted in the adjacent marine park and marine reserve, clear boundary identification is paramount. Together with yellow on-shore markers, significant and easily identified landforms are used in literature to communicate the boundaries of the Marine National Park to visitors. Because of the difficulties and costs associated with installation and maintenance, in-water boundary markers are not feasible. Furthermore, in-water boundary markers would be difficult to see in the planning area and would create a shipping hazard.

On-shore boundary markers are located within the adjacent national park, at the southern ends of Norman Bay and Cape Wellington – the western and eastern boundaries respectively (figure 2).

The Marine National Park boundary extends from the on-shore boundary marker at the southern end of Norman Bay in a south-westerly direction towards to the most northerly point of Great Glennie Island. From

here it extends 300 m from the mean low water mark on Great Glennie, McHugh and Dannevig Islands. The boundary then extends in a south-easterly direction from the Citadel Island Beacon to the centre of Cleft Island (and surrounding Cleft Island 300 m from the mean low water mark). It then follows a south-easterly direction towards Forty Foot Rocks. At a bearing (figure 2), the boundary takes a north-easterly direction towards a bearing that intersects the eastern boundary of the Marine National Park. The eastern boundary of the Marine National Park extends from the on-shore boundary marker at Cape Wellington in the north, to a bearing in the direction of the centre of Rodondo Island. Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park extends to 200 m below the seabed and adjoins Wilsons Promontory Marine Park and Marine Reserve.

Wilsons Promontory Marine Park consists of two areas. The first extends from Shallow Inlet out to Shellback Island and from there landwards to Norman Bay in the west, ending at the boundary of the Marine National Park. The landward boundary is the mean low water mark. The second area extends 300 m seawards from the low water mark between Refuge Cove and Entrance Point in the east (figure 2). The marine park also surrounds Norman Island and Rabbit Island from the mean low water mark to 300 m offshore. These islands form part of Wilsons Promontory National Park to the mean low water mark. The marine park extends vertically from the water surface to the centre of the Earth.

Wilsons Promontory Marine Reserve consists of three sections. One section of approximately 90 ha lies at the southern end of Norman Bay in the west, and another extends from Cape Wellington to the southern part of Refuge Cove in the east (figure 2). Both these areas are bounded by the coastline and extend seawards 300 m from the mean low water mark. The marine reserve also surrounds all islands in the Glennie Group, from the mean low water mark out to 300 m offshore. These islands form part of Wilsons Promontory National Park to the mean low water mark. Wilsons Promontory Marine Reserve also extends vertically from the water surface to the centre of the Earth.

Wilson's Promontory Marine Reserve and Wilson's Promontory Marine Park are managed under identical legislative provisions; there is no practical difference in the way the two areas are managed. As this is at times confusing to both park managers and visitors, information, interpretation and education programs will need to be integrated to ensure seamless management of both these areas, particularly as it relates to fishing regulations.

Adjacent uses

Management of the planning area is integrated with that of the adjoining Wilson's Promontory National Park. Information, interpretation and education programs in particular seek to communicate information and regulations across the entire marine and terrestrial protected areas of Wilson's Promontory, without allowing the variety of land and water tenures to confuse messages (section 6.1).

The Wilderness Zone of Wilson's Promontory National Park adjoins a majority of the eastern portion of the marine park on the eastern side of Wilson's Promontory. Activities within the planning area, particularly those close to the shore, need to consider the adjacent Wilderness Zone and management prescriptions in the *Wilson's Promontory Wilderness Zone Management Plan* (NRE 1995) and *Wilson's Promontory National Park Management Plan* (Parks Victoria 2002a).

Additional to the Wilderness Zone, the Vereker Creek Reference Area Zone adjoins Wilson's Promontory Marine Park at the southern end of Five Mile Beach, and the Entrance Point Reference Area Zone adjoins the marine park at the northern end of Wilson's Promontory (Parks Victoria 2002a). Another Reference Area Zone – the Anser Island Reference Area Zone – is surrounded by Wilson's Promontory Marine National Park to the high water mark (Parks Victoria 2002a). Activities within the planning area, particularly those close to the shore, need to consider the adjacent Reference Areas and management objectives and prescriptions of the *Reference Areas Act 1978* (Vic.) and the *Wilson's Promontory National Park Management Plan* (Parks Victoria 2002a).

Wilson's Promontory Marine National Park adjoins the Southern Wilson's Promontory Remote and Natural Area Overlay. Twelve of

the offshore islands of Wilson's Promontory are included within the Wilson's Promontory Islands Remote and Natural Area Overlay. Shellback, Norman and Rabbit islands adjoin Wilson's Promontory Marine Park at the low water mark; islands within the Glennie Group of islands adjoin Wilson's Promontory Marine Reserve at the low water mark; and, islands within the Anser Group of islands adjoin Wilson's Promontory Marine National Park at the high water mark. Activities within the planning area, particularly those close to the shore, need to consider the adjacent Remote and Natural Area Overlays, and management prescriptions in the *Wilson's Promontory National Park Management Plan* (Parks Victoria 2002a).

Within the western end of Norman Bay, Wilson's Promontory Marine Park adjoins the Recreation Zone of Wilson's Promontory National Park. Activities within the planning area, particularly those close to the shore, need to consider the adjacent Recreation Zone and management prescriptions in the *Wilson's Promontory National Park Management Plan* (Parks Victoria 2002a).

State waters and the underlying seabed adjoining the planning area are currently unreserved Crown land. The Government accepted the ECC's recommendation that a Coastal Waters Reserve be established under the Crown Land (Reserves) Act for the major portion of Victoria's marine area not otherwise designated for a particular purpose, to provide for a diverse range of activities that are compatible with long-term sustainable use (ECC 2000).

The Bass Basin Candidate Marine Protected Area (MPA) is close to the planning area to the south-east. This candidate MPA forms part of the network of candidate MPAs in Commonwealth waters in the South-east Marine Region.

Aims

- Ensure the integration of management of the planning area with adjoining land and waters in accordance with principles for ecologically sustainable development.
- Ensure that necessary boundaries are clearly identifiable.

- Minimise confusion by simplifying land tenure in the planning area.

Management strategies

- *Ensure that information, interpretation and education programs for the planning area are integrated with those of the adjoining Wilsons Promontory National Park (section 6.1).*
- *Ensure that management of the planning area complements the aims and objectives for the adjoining Wilsons Promontory National Park, including those for the Wilsons Promontory Wilderness Zone; the Vereker Creek, Entrance Point and Anser Island Reference Area Zones; the Southern Wilsons Promontory and Wilsons*

Promontory Islands Remote and Natural Area Overlays; and, the Wilsons Promontory Recreation Zone Overlay.

- *Ensure that boundaries of Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park are clearly identifiable from the land and sea, with supporting information, interpretation and education programs (section 6.1).*
- *Integrate information, interpretation and education programs that relate to fishing regulations for the marine park and marine reserve to ensure seamless management of the two areas (section 6.1).*

8 STRATEGIES FOR COMMUNITY AWARENESS AND INVOLVEMENT

8.1 Community awareness

Raising the community's awareness of the planning area's values is an essential step in developing its sense of custodianship for the park and engagement in the area's management. Community members are more likely to develop a sense of custodianship for the planning area if their views and values are respected and park-related social networks are encouraged and supported. A strong connection with the planning area among visitors and in the local and wider community assists in broader public education, raising awareness and reaching others in the community.

Increasing awareness in the community of a number of key threatening processes and other management issues in the planning area assists in minimising the potential for further impacts. Management issues that would benefit from greater community awareness include:

- introduced marine pests (section 4.6)
- adherence to fishing regulations in Wilsons Promontory Marine Park and Wilsons Promontory Marine Reserve (section 6.6).

Information, interpretation and education programs play an integral role in raising community awareness of these issues. Parks Victoria aims to communicate the benefits of a healthy parks system and its contribution to the health of individuals and society through the 'Healthy Parks Healthy People' program.

The Coast Action / Coastcare program works with a variety of volunteer groups and coastal community organisations to build broader community awareness and understanding of marine and coastal issues and to achieve on-ground works. There are opportunities for all parts of the community to participate in Coast Action / Coastcare facilitated activities, including interpretation and education programs (section 6.1).

Indigenous tradition indicates the planning area is part of the *Country* of the Gunai / Kurnai and Boonwurrung people. The

Traditional Owners continue to have a strong affinity with the area today (section 5.1). Opportunities exist, through information, interpretation and education programs, to build broader community awareness of the significance of the park to Indigenous communities (section 6.1). This will aid in the development of greater respect and recognition of Indigenous culture in the broader community.

Aims

- Build a shared sense of ownership and custodianship for the planning area in community groups and individuals.
- Increase the community's awareness and understanding of the planning area's values, management activities and catchment impacts.

Management strategies

- *Ensure that information, interpretation and education programs for the planning area (section 6.1) include messages to raise awareness of values and management, including:*
 - *introduced marine pests (section 4.6), with particular emphasis on the importance of preventing introductions, and early detection of introductions*
 - *adherence to fishing regulations in Wilsons Promontory Marine Park and Wilsons Promontory Marine Reserve.*
- *Publicise to the broader community the work of Friends, volunteers and community groups.*
- *Encourage and support community-based projects aimed at communicating the benefits of marine conservation and protection.*
- *Promote opportunities for community members to become directly involved in interpretation and education programs, including face-to-face interpretation and volunteer programs (section 6.1 and 8.2).*

- *Promote the benefits of assisting conservation programs to community groups in line with 'Healthy Parks Healthy People' objectives.*
- *Encourage and support volunteers and community groups to further develop an understanding of the planning area's values, including Indigenous cultural heritage and its significance to the Indigenous communities (section 5.1).*

8.2 Community participation

The participation of community groups and individuals in the management of the planning area is pivotal in effective long-term planning, use and care of the planning area's values. Volunteers and community groups make valuable contributions to park management projects. They bring diverse and valuable information, knowledge, skills and experience to the planning area that may otherwise not be available to park managers. Volunteers also bring great enthusiasm and add valuable resources to assist with the care of parks. Such groups are committed to marine protected area conservation and awareness of environmental issues.

The interests of community groups in the planning area may often overlap and may not be complementary. There can be considerable mutual benefits where such groups work together and with Parks Victoria to achieve common goals.

Community participation in the investigation and monitoring of the planning area is valuable to management from both an ecological and a social perspective. With appropriate training and support, community-based surveys conducted by volunteers can supply useful information on easily recognised species and habitats. Such surveys can produce valuable information that complements more detailed scientific surveys of the planning area.

Community involvement in monitoring the planning area is also valuable in developing awareness and the profile of natural, cultural and social values, as well as building community custodianship (section 8.1). Such information collection and sharing is likely to lead to a more rapid detection of unexpected or unusual natural events and marine pest introductions.

Indigenous Traditional Owners have considerable interest in and aspirations for the planning area as part of *Country*. They are also an important potential source of traditional knowledge about the area that has yet to be documented. A strong working relationship with the Traditional Owners will be essential to the reflection of their cultural lore in the planning and management of the planning area, and reconciliation of their interests and aspirations with those of other members of the community.

Reef Watch is a non-profit project developed by the Australian Marine Conservation Society and funded by the Federal and State Government through Coast Action / Coastcare. The project calls on the voluntary assistance of Victorian divers (both scuba and snorkel) to help describe and monitor marine life in a variety of habitats. Parks Victoria endorses the Reef Watch program as a mechanism for the involvement of the community in marine monitoring.

South Gippsland Waterwatch is a community-based water quality monitoring program. There are currently no water quality monitoring programs in the catchment of the planning area. However, there is scope to expand the Waterwatch program to other key sites within the catchment, including Sealers Creek and other creeks in the south (section 4.2).

Other groups, such as local dive clubs and the South Gippsland Conservation Society, can supply important resource information on the planning area. Volunteers introduce increased capacity, diversity in skills and great enthusiasm to the planning, use and care of parks.

Operating since 1979, Friends of the Prom have been active in conservation programs and projects in the adjacent national park. Friends of The Prom are interested in extending their activities to the planning area.

Members of local dive clubs and other interested divers have a wealth of information in the form of knowledge, marine natural history and underwater photography. Members of the Scuba Divers Federation of Victoria (SDFV), representing many local dive clubs across the State, have been diving the planning area recreationally for many years.

The South Gippsland Conservation Society is active in protecting natural resources from environmentally damaging development through undertaking on-ground activities and education. The Foster Branch of the Society pursues local issues and activities relevant to the planning area and employs an Education Officer for the area, based at Foster.

Other volunteer organisations, including the South Gippsland Environmental Education and Interpretation Centre, Field Naturalists Club of Victoria, Birds Australia, Conservation Volunteers of Australia, and tertiary and work experience students, have assisted with, or are interested in, various projects that benefit the planning area.

Parks Victoria's research partnerships will be expanded to incorporate priorities for the planning area (Parks Victoria 2003a). Tertiary student research into the planning area can be undertaken as part of Parks Victoria's research partnerships.

Opportunities to develop networks and alliances between interest groups, community organisations and volunteers will be encouraged. Friends of The Prom have shown an interest in forming an association with members of SDFV.

Aims

- Support and encourage the active participation of community groups and volunteers in protection, conservation and monitoring projects to enhance management of the planning area.
- Provide opportunities for, and encourage, tertiary students to undertake volunteer work experience and research consistent with aims for the planning area.
- Inform, enrich and strengthen the planning area's management with the community's tradition and customs, especially the Traditional Owner's cultural lore.

Management strategies

- *Seek to establish, maintain and strengthen relationships with Friends and volunteers and other community groups that use or have a particular interest in the planning area. Encourage and support such groups to work together with each other and*

Parks Victoria to achieve shared goals for the planning area.

- *Continue to encourage and support volunteer groups in the planning area, including activities such as marine flora and fauna monitoring, marine photography and community education.*
- *Continue to build a strong relationship with the relevant Indigenous communities. In particular, seek to further develop a close inclusive working partnership with the Traditional Owners and cooperation with the scheduled Aboriginal community.*
- *Together with the management of Wilsons Promontory National Park, seek to establish a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and working protocols with the Traditional Owners, and the scheduled Aboriginal community, regarding the assessment of annual works programs (section 5.1).*
- *Support volunteer and community groups in sourcing funding for appropriate community projects to benefit the planning area.*
- *Encourage and support the Coast Action / Coastcare program within the planning area, particularly focusing on marine and coastal ecology and threatening processes.*
- *Support alliances and networks between all groups interested or involved in the management of the planning area.*
- *Encourage the Friends of The Prom to expand their interests to the planning area.*
- *Liaise and cooperate as appropriate with the relevant Indigenous communities in dealing with Indigenous cultural issues that relate to the planning area.*
- *Encourage community involvement in Reef Watch monitoring and recording programs.*
- *Encourage water quality monitoring programs by South Gippsland Waterwatch in the catchment of the planning area, including Sealers Creek and other creeks to the south.*
- *Develop a long-term volunteer strategy that incorporates the skills and interests of volunteer groups, individuals and tertiary*

students in research and management activities, consistent with operational policies.

8.3 Agency partnerships

Although Parks Victoria is responsible for overall management of the planning area, other agencies are responsible for planning, managing or regulating certain activities in the planning area.

All activities relating to the planning area that are carried out by Parks Victoria or other agencies need to accord with all legislation and government policy and, as far as practicable, be consistent with agencies' policies and guidelines. To ensure this occurs, park staff must work closely with staff of relevant agencies and collaborate in implementing activities where appropriate.

DSE establishes parks, oversees the management of land and resources of Victoria's coastal Crown land and waters, and provides strategic direction and policy advice for the management of the planning area, including marine flora and fauna values and threatening processes. Parks Victoria is a support agency for responses to oiled wildlife and cetacean stranding or entanglement (section 4.4), operating at the direction of DSE.

As part of agreed service delivery arrangements, Fisheries Victoria – Department of Primary Industries has primary responsibility for enforcement to ensure compliance with the fishing prohibitions under the National Parks Act in the Marine National Park, and for fishing compliance in the marine park and marine reserve. Parks Victoria will continue to collaborate with Fisheries Victoria and Victoria Police in activities such as cooperative Ranger and Fisheries officer patrols and support arrangements in accordance with the regional compliance plan (Parks Victoria 2005b).

The Gippsland Coastal Board provides for the long-term strategic planning of the eastern coast of Victoria, including the preparation of Coastal Action Plans (section 4.2). It provides direction and policy advice to facilitate sustainable development of the east coast of Victoria through implementation of the Victorian Coastal Strategy (VCC 2002).

West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority is responsible for ensuring protection and sustainable development of land, vegetation and water resources within the region, including preparation of the Regional Catchment Strategy that specifically addresses the impacts of land use and management on the planning area (section 4.2).

The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) has primary responsibility for environmental protection of all waters in Victoria and is responsible for administering and enforcing the *Environment Protection Act 1970* (Vic.), including all activities relating to the discharge of litter and waste to the environment (section 4.2). This includes the Tidal River treatment plant and South East Point Lightstation. EPA Victoria also develops State Environment Protection Policies (SEPP) for State waters.

Parks Victoria is a support agency for Marine Safety Victoria at a statewide and regional level for marine pollution incidents, contributing on-site response and incident management as well as technical advice. Marine Safety Victoria is responsible for administering the Marine Act, including the planning and implementation of pollution response and marine safety initiatives (sections 4.2 and 6.9) and compliance with boating speed restrictions under the Marine Act (section 6.3). Toll Westernport is the delegated regional marine pollution control agency for the western section of the planning area (west of South East Point), and Gippsland Ports is the regional marine pollution control agency for the eastern section.

South Gippsland Shire has a key role in administering the planning scheme for land nearby the planning area, including assessing developments that could have an impact on the values of the planning area. Parks Victoria provides input into planning applications to ensure the protection of planning area values.

Through Aboriginal Affairs Victoria (AAV), the Department of Victorian Communities (DVC) has responsibility for administering legislation protecting cultural heritage (sections 2.5 and 5.1). AAV and the Gippsland Cultural Heritage Unit advise Parks Victoria on Indigenous matters.

Heritage Victoria (DSE) is the central government agency which provides

information and advice about places listed on the Victorian Heritage Register and Archaeological Inventory. It supports the Heritage Council through research, recommends additions to the Register and issues permits for alterations to heritage places.

The Minerals and Petroleum Division (Department of Primary Industries) is responsible for the sustainable development of the extractive, oil and gas, pipelines, geothermal energy, minerals exploration and mining industries in Victoria, through the provision of policy advice, regulation and promotion.

Tourism Victoria is the State government authority responsible for developing and marketing Victoria to Australian and international travellers. The planning area is within Tourism Victoria's Gippsland marketing and promotion region. Prom Country Tourism is the Regional Tourism Authority, and Prom Coast Tourism is the Local Tourism Association. Parks Victoria will work with State and regional tourism authorities to ensure that the park is appropriately promoted in regional visitor information centres and in regional tourism strategies.

Victorian agencies work cooperatively with the Commonwealth Department of the Environment and Heritage on the management of regional ecosystem conservation issues.

Aim

- Enhance management of the planning area by collaborating with other agencies to ensure that they give appropriate consideration to park values in planning and implementing activities that relate to the planning area.

Management strategies

- *Work collaboratively with all agencies to implement the plan vision and directions. In particular, work with:*
 - *DSE regarding future planning and management, including protection of marine flora and fauna from potentially threatening processes*
 - *Fisheries Victoria to implement the fishing prohibition in the Marine*

National Park; the fishing regulations in the marine park and marine reserve; and the Regional Compliance Plan

- *Gippsland Coastal Board on any future planning and strategies that relate to the planning area*
- *West Gippsland CMA to reduce the impacts of land use and management of the catchment on the planning area, and the implementation of appropriate actions in the Regional Catchment Strategy and Regional River Health Strategy*
- *EPA Victoria to minimise impacts associated with discharge of waste into the environment, including from the Tidal River treatment plant and South East Point Lightstation*
- *Marine Safety Victoria on input into the planning and implementation of marine safety initiatives within the planning area and adjacent waters, including compliance with boating zone and other regulations (section 6.3); potential implications of the creation of 'safe' havens for commercial vessels (section 7.1); and, current and future arrangements for the Inshore Traffic Zone (section 7.1)*
- *Toll Westernport and Gippsland Ports for marine pollution control and response*
- *South Gippsland Shire regarding the administration of the planning scheme to minimise impacts from future development in adjacent coastal and catchment areas*
- *AAV on compliance with relevant cultural heritage legislation*
- *AAV and Gippsland Cultural Heritage Unit on issues relating to Indigenous affairs*
- *Heritage Victoria on heritage management and compliance with the Heritage Act*
- *State and regional tourism authorities to promote the planning area appropriately in regional visitor*

information centres and in regional tourism strategies

- *Commonwealth Department of the Environment and Heritage on the management of regional ecosystem conservation issues.*

- *Maintain communications with Minerals and Petroleum (DPI), the petroleum industry and other agencies with respect to petroleum activities near the park.*
- *Update contingency plans for marine pollution incidents, such as oil and chemical spills, and cetacean / wildlife incidents as required, and communicate arrangements to staff, relevant agencies and interested parties.*

9 PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

9.1 Delivery and reporting

A range of approaches will be used to implement strategies in this plan. Some will be undertaken as part of routine management activities such as ranger visits; others will be addressed as part of regional programs undertaken across the State each year.

A priority list of all the strategies in the plan will be used to guide routine management, and identify detailed actions in annual regional programs. Priorities for regional programs vary from year to year depending on available resources and government priorities.

At the end of each year, progress towards implementing strategies in the plan will be reviewed and the priority list updated. Staff report internally against 'on time and within budget' delivery of regional programs and whether the completed strategy has achieved the objective. Parks Victoria reports annually to Government on the overall delivery of regional and divisional programs. This broader reporting on management performance is available in annual reports prepared on the National Parks Act and Parks Victoria.

During implementation of the plan Parks Victoria will work in partnership with Traditional Owners and the scheduled Aboriginal Community. On-going collaborative activities with the relevant Indigenous communities, interested members of the community, scientists and agencies in realising the vision and management directions for the planning area will be especially important as outlined in previous sections of the plan.

Implementation of the plan will be consistent with Parks Victoria's commitment to sustainable practices, which involves the delivery of operations, services and facilities in an ecologically and socially responsible manner with minimal use of expendable resources and minimal generation of waste.

In implementing the plan, management will respond to monitoring and research information as it emerges. Parks Victoria's environmental management framework makes this possible. Based on the International Standard for Environmental Management

Systems (ISO 14001), the framework ensures that the future condition of values is considered in identifying threats and developing actions to ameliorate them. Over time the success of actions is reviewed against set objectives to ensure ongoing learning and refinement of management. The selection of actions and treatments of threats are guided by the precautionary principle. Management options are evaluated on the basis of least impact on the environment. Treatment of threats with a potential for serious damage that is not addressed in the plan will not be postponed for lack of information.

Parks Victoria will use a variety of means to report to the community about the progress of implementation of the plan. The primary means will be through routine liaison between Parks Victoria, interested groups and individuals from the local community and relevant government agencies. In addition to giving regular updates, there will be opportunities for input by interested members of the community into annual priority setting and feedback on management performance. Events such as Park open days and community and volunteer forums will offer similar opportunities for reporting and discussions about annual programs.

The results of monitoring and research work will continue to be available to the community as technical reports available on Parks Victoria's website www.parkweb.vic.gov.au.

Parks Victoria will also report on evaluation of the plan (section 9.3) at the start of the new or revised plan, through routine liaison and community forums and in the subsequent draft plan.

Future reporting on the Statewide Strategy (Parks Victoria 2003) and State of the Parks reports, which will be available on the Parks Victoria's website, will also include information on management performance in the planning area.

9.2 Plan amendment

During the 10-year life of the plan, amendments to the plan may only be made by the Secretary to DSE, following an authorised

process which includes community consultation.

Circumstances that might lead to amendment of the plan include:

- the results of monitoring or research, management experience or new information (such as greater understanding of new threatening processes) which indicate the need for a change in management direction
- significant changes in visitation or use
- a change in policy that calls into question plan objectives
- new legislation (such as significant boundary changes).

The plan may also be amended if an activity, development or use which conflicts with the provisions of the plan is approved by government (such as native title outcomes).

9.3 Evaluation and review

Periodically through the life of the plan Parks Victoria will assess overall progress towards implementing the strategies in the plan and also assess progress towards achieving the plan vision and directions. These evaluations will inform a decision about whether a new or revised plan is required. The achievements of the plan will be assessed by considering performance areas such as:

Protecting natural values

- Overall improvement in biodiversity.
- Compliance with no-fishing provisions and park regulations.
- Timely management intervention to minimise threats.
- Minimal impact of permitted uses.

Protecting cultural values

- Progress towards working with Traditional Owners in managing the park and in protecting and interpreting Indigenous cultural heritage.
- Timely management intervention to minimise damaging activities and threats.

Managing recreation and visitor use

- Managing impact from visitors, including individuals and school and tour groups.
- Meeting community expectations in relation to Parks Victoria's management of the park.
- Improving community and visitor awareness.

Providing for research and promoting understanding

- Improving understanding of the composition and distribution of habitats and ecological processes.
- Ongoing Traditional Owner and other community participation.
- Clear identification of major knowledge gaps.

Methods for evaluating the benefits of the plan are likely to be refined over time. Parks Victoria partners with external research agencies to establish benchmarks and indicators for major communities and habitats. Through sound monitoring and assessment methods this monitoring and research work will strengthen the basis for comparing management performance over time.

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GLOSSARY

Algae (seaweed) – plant-like organisms that use light energy to create food. Unlike plants, algae are not differentiated into roots, stems and leaves. Commonly called seaweed.

Ascidian (sea squirt) – common type of solitary or colonial marine animal.

Ballast water – water carried in a ship's tanks for stability. Normally discharged to the sea when the ship is loaded, and can be contaminated with pollution or exotic organisms.

Biodiversity – the natural diversity of all life: the sum of all our native species of flora and fauna, the genetic variation within them, their habitats and the ecosystems of which they are an integral part.

Bioregion – an area with particular underlying environmental and ecological features.

Bivalve – type of mollusc possessing two shells (e.g. scallop, mussel).

Bommie (bombora) – a rocky reef over which waves break.

Bryozoan (lace coral) – common small colonial marine animal, flat or upright, occurring in many colours.

Canopy – structural overstorey (e.g. of kelp).

Catchment – the area of land that drains to a watercourse or estuary.

Chiton – any marine mollusc of the class Amphineura, having a shell of overlapping plates.

Catchment – the area of land that drains to a watercourse or estuary.

Coast – in broad terms, the sea and the seabed to the State limit (three nautical miles, or 5.5 km) and the land and inland waters within the coastal catchment.

Coastal action plan (CAP) – plan that identifies strategic directions and objectives for use and development in the region or part of the region to facilitate recreational use and tourism, and to provide for protection and enhancement of significant features of the coast, including the marine environment.

Coastal zone - includes coastal waters and those areas landward of the coastal waters where there are processes or activities that affect the coast and its values.

Coastline – generally, the line along which the land meets the sea.

Country – in Indigenous usage, all of nature, culture and spirituality relating to an area.

Crown land – land belonging to the State.

Cultural lore – tradition about stories, songs, rituals, ceremonies, dances, art, customs and spiritual beliefs.

Customs – observances and practices of people (includes land management and resource use) in accordance with tradition.

Demersal – fish living near the sea bottom.

Devonian period – Geological time period from 360 to 405 million years ago.

Dreaming – in Indigenous usage has meanings that differ between people, but generally encompasses and explains Aboriginal creation and defines and explains the rules governing relationships between the people in accordance with their tradition.

Ecologically sustainable development (ESD) – development that improves the total quality of life both now and in the future, in a way that maintains the ecological processes on which life depends.

Ecosystem – a dynamic complex of interacting organisms and their associated non-living environment.

Effluent – a liquid, partially or completely treated or in its natural state, released into the environment from a water or sewage treatment plant.

Exotic marine organism / species – see Pest.

Flotsam – In maritime law, applies to wreckage or cargo left floating on the sea after a shipwreck. The common phrase *flotsam and jetsam* is now used loosely to describe any objects found floating or washed (respectively) ashore. See also *Jetsam*.

Force majeure – an unforeseeable course of events excusing a person from the fulfilment of a contract.

Foreshore – generally, the land between a coastal road and the low water mark.

Geomorphology – the scientific study of landforms and geological formations and the processes that shape them.

Habitat – the preferred location or 'home' of an organism.

Heritage – a place, activity, cultural way of life, structure or group of structures that have aesthetic, historic, scientific or social value for past, present or future generations.

High water mark – the landward boundary of high water mark is the average of the highest tides (spring and neap).

Holocene epoch – the most recent geological period covering from 12 000 years ago to the present.

Hydroid – small tentacled animal related to corals and sea-jellies. Common but often overlooked.

Indigenous cultural heritage – the cultural lore, places and objects of significance to Indigenous people in accordance with tradition.

Indigenous people – people who are descendants of Aboriginal Australians.

Infrastructure – physical structures that facilitate the human use of an area (e.g. roads, paths, toilet blocks).

Integrated coastal zone management (ICZM) – a framework that attempts to integrate planning and management in a region (e.g. Victoria) across the land and sea interface and the private and public land interface, to treat the coastal zone as one biophysical entity.

Intertidal zone – the area between low and high tide levels, which is subject to daily changes in physical and biological conditions from tide movements.

Invertebrate – an animal without a backbone at any stage of development (e.g. worms, sponges).

Jetsam – In maritime law, applies to cargo or equipment thrown overboard from a ship in distress and either sunk or washed ashore. The common phrase *flotsam and jetsam* is now used loosely to describe any objects found floating or washed (respectively) ashore. See also *Flotsam*.

Lichens – any plant organism of the group Lichenes, composed of a fungus and an alga in symbiotic association.

Marine National Park – in Victoria, highly protected areas reserved and managed under Schedule 7 of the National Parks Act that represent the range of marine environments in Victoria, and in which no fishing, extractive or damaging activities are allowed.

Marine protected area – a marine area that has some form of protection and is managed for conservation objectives.

Marine Sanctuary – in Victoria, a small, highly protected area reserved and managed under Schedule 8 of the National Parks Act to protect special values, and in which no fishing, extractive or damaging activities are allowed. These areas complement Marine National Parks.

Matters of National Environmental Significance – defined by the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act to include: World Heritage Properties; Ramsar wetlands; nationally

threatened species and communities; migratory species protected under international agreements; the Commonwealth marine environment; and, nuclear actions.

Mollusc – broad group of animals including snails, sea slugs, squid, octopus, cuttlefish and mussels.

Neap tides – tide occurring twice every month between spring tides, but slightly lower.

Pelagic relating to the surface waters of the marine environment.

Pest – exotic organisms (plants, animals or pathogens) that, if introduced outside their natural or previous distribution, they cause significant changes to habitats, food chains, ecosystems or human health by feeding on or competing with native species. Can refer to either terrestrial or marine species.

Photosynthesis – the process by which organic molecules are made from carbon dioxide and water, using light energy. This process is essential for the growth and survival of plants and algae.

Pleistocene epoch – Geological time period from 2 million years ago to 10 000 years ago.

Quaternary period – Geological time period from 2 million years ago to present.

Relevant Indigenous communities – includes the Traditional Owners, and any scheduled Aboriginal Community/s for areas included in the park.

Scheduled Aboriginal Community – body or bodies scheduled under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage Protection Act relating to the park.

Sediment – insoluble material carried in water, consisting mainly of particles derived from rock, soil and organic material; such material that has settled out of the water, onto the seabed.

Semi-diurnal – Two high tides and two low tides in a lunar day (24 hour period).

Sewage – household or commercial waste water that contains human or trade wastes.

Soft coral – coral without solid calcareous cases for structure. Generally colonial and found on hard surfaces.

Sponge – multicellular, filter-feeding animals which occur in a variety of forms. Sponges are the simplest form of invertebrate life.

Spring tides – occur twice every month at new and full moon and are the highest tides.

Stakeholder – an individual or group that has a vested interest in, or may be affected by, a project or process.

Threatening process – a source of potential harm or a situation with a potential to cause loss.

Tradition – the body of knowledge, belief and customs that is passed from generation to generation.

Traditional owners – communities of people that reasonably assert an association with the park area that is based on direct descent from the original Indigenous custodians of Country, in accordance with Indigenous tradition.

Translocation – the transfer of pests from one area to a new area.

Whip coral (sea whip) – specialised whip-like form of coral. Commonly lives in deep water on hard and soft surfaces.

Abbreviations

ANZECC – former Australian and New Zealand Environment and Conservation Council. ANZECC was represented by government Ministers and guided national policy and programs relating to the management of the environment and its conservation.

CRIMP – Centre for Research on Introduced Marine Pests.

CSIRO – Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation.

DSE – Department of Sustainability and Environment.

ECC – former Environment Conservation Council (see VEAC).

EPA – Environment Protection Authority (Victoria).

NRE – former Department of Natural Resources and Environment.

VEAC – Victorian Environmental Assessment Council.

APPENDIX 1 MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES FOR THE PLANNING AREA

Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park

Management objectives of the National Parks Act for marine national parks included on Schedule 7 of the Act, are in Sections 4 and 17D of the Act and are listed below.

For an up-to-date copy of the National Parks Act, refer to Victorian Acts on the Victorian Legislative and Parliamentary Documents website www.dms.dpc.vic.gov.au.

4. Objects of the Act

The objects of this Act are –

- (a) to make provision, in respect of national parks, State parks, marine national parks and marine sanctuaries –
 - (i) for the preservation and protection of the natural environment including wilderness areas and remote and natural areas in those parks;
 - (ii) for the protection and preservation of indigenous flora and fauna and of features of scenic or archaeological, ecological, geological, historic or other scientific interest in those parks; and
 - (iii) for the study of ecology, geology, botany, zoology and other sciences relating to the conservation of the natural environment in those parks; and
 - (iv) for the responsible management of the land in those parks;
- (c) to make provision in accordance with the foregoing for the use of parks by the public for the purposes of enjoyment, recreation or education, and for the encouragement and control of that use.

Section 17D Marine national parks and

marine sanctuaries of the National Parks Act provides that the Secretary, subject to this Act will ensure that each marine national park and marine sanctuary is controlled and managed in accordance with the objects (above) in a manner that will –

- (3)(a) The Secretary, subject to this Act will ensure that each marine national park and marine sanctuary is controlled and

managed in accordance with the objects of this Act in a manner that will –

- (i) preserve and protect the natural environment and indigenous flora and fauna of the park and any features of the park which are of geological, geomorphological, ecological, scenic, archaeological, historic or other scientific interest; and
 - (ii) promote the prevention of the introduction of exotic flora and fauna into the park; and
 - (iii) provide for the eradication or control of exotic flora and fauna found in the park; and
- (b) subject to paragraph (a) –
- (i) provide for the use, enjoyment and understanding of Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries by the public; and
 - (ii) promote and understanding of the purpose and significance of Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries; and
- (c) prepare a plan of management in respect of each marine national park and each marine sanctuary.

Wilsons Promontory Marine Park and Wilsons Promontory Marine Reserve

Management objectives for the Wilsons Promontory Marine Park and Wilsons Promontory Marine Reserve included on Schedule 4 of the National Parks Act, are included in Sections 4(b) and 4(c) of the Act (as listed below).

4. Objects of the Act

- 4(b) to make provision, insofar as is appropriate to each such park, for the protection and preservation of indigenous flora and fauna and of features of scenic or archaeological, ecological, historic or other scientific interest; and subject to such provision as is made under subparagraph (i), to make provision for the public to observe, experience or otherwise become acquainted in those parks with the

countryside and rural skills activities and pursuits and for carrying on, in those parks and for those purposes, agricultural, horticultural, or other agrarian projects and botanical, biological, ecological, geological, zoological, or other scientific studies or projects; and

4(c) to make provision in accordance with the foregoing for the use of parks by the public for the purposes of enjoyment, recreation or education and for the encouragement and control of that use.

Section 18 Other Parks of the National Parks Act provides that the Secretary, subject to this Act—ensure that the park or reserve is controlled and managed in accordance with the objects (above) in a manner that will—

2(a) ensure that each park is controlled and managed in accordance with the objects of the Act in a manner that will, insofar as is appropriate to the park –

(i) preserve, protect and re-establish indigenous flora and fauna in the park;

- (ii) preserve and protect features in the park of scenic, archaeological, ecological, geological, historic or other scientific interest;
- (iii) enable the park to be used by the public for the enjoyment, observation and study of the countryside and its pursuits, its flora and fauna, its ecology and geology and other features; and
- (iv) control exotic flora and fauna in the park;
- (b) ensure that proper and sufficient measures are taken to protect each park from injury by fire;
- (c) promote and encourage the use and enjoyment of parks by the public; and
- (d) prepare a plan of management in respect of each park.

APPENDIX 2 SUBMISSIONS ON THE DRAFT MANAGEMENT PLAN

A total of 19 submissions were received on the draft plan (November 2004 – February 2005) from the following organisations and individuals.

Note: Eight submissions are included which related to all Victorian Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries, and no submissions were marked confidential.

| ORGANISATION / GROUP | SUBMISSION No. |
|--|----------------|
| Submissions from groups | Total: 14 |
| Aboriginal Affairs Victoria, Gippsland # | 2 |
| Bird Observers Club of Australia | 14 |
| Department of Defence (Commonwealth) # | 17 |
| Department of Primary Industries # | 16 |
| Department of Sustainability and Environment (Gippsland) # | 8 |
| Environment Protection Authority # | 19 |
| Gippsland Coastal Board | 18 |
| Gippsland Ports | 11 |
| Heritage Victoria | 1 |
| Scuba Diving Federation of Victoria # | 13 |
| South Gippsland Conservation Society | 10 |
| Tourism Victoria # | 15 |
| West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority | 9 |

| INDIVIDUALS | SUBMISSION No. |
|------------------------------|----------------|
| Submissions from individuals | Total: 5 |
| Andrew Chapman | 4 |
| Graeme Creed | 5 |
| John Dickie | 3 |
| Dr Matt Edmunds # | 7 |
| Roger Fenwick | 12 |
| Greg Hunt MP | 6 |

Denotes submissions relating to all Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries.

APPENDIX 3 MARINE ECOLOGICAL COMMUNITIES

| MARINE ECOLOGICAL COMMUNITY | MARINE NATIONAL PARK | MARINE PARK / MARINE RESERVE | LOCATION | SUMMARY DESCRIPTION |
|--|----------------------|------------------------------|--|---|
| Sandy beaches (approx. 5% of planning area) | Yes | No | All intertidal sandy beach areas between the mean high and low water mark within Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park, including Little Oberon Bay, Oberon Bay, Waterloo Bay, Home Cove, Little Waterloo Bay, North Waterloo Bay. | Characterised by non-vegetated areas with a variety of sand grains and types, controlled largely by the degree of exposure to wave action. Fauna species include a variety of macroinvertebrates, the most notable being the Soldier Crab. |
| Intertidal rocky shores (approx. 10% of planning area) | Yes | No | All rocky shore areas of Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park between the mean high and low water marks. | Dominated by steep granite boulders, and therefore often only as wide as the tidal range itself. Typical organisms include lichens, various barnacle species, chitons, ascidians and various large brown algae, small fish and shore birds such as the Sooty Oystercatcher. |
| Subtidal reef (approx. 35% of planning area) | Yes | Yes | Shallow reef: All reef areas from the mean Low Water Mark to 30 m depth, and to 20 m depth on vertical walls. Deep reef: Reefs deeper than 30 m, and 20 m from vertical walls. Particularly prevalent on bommies, pinnacles and reefs with a high exposure to currents, such as around Cleft Island. | Shallow reef: Dominated by dense canopy cover of Crayweed and <i>Ecklonia</i> kelp. High species richness of mobile invertebrates and large variety of fish species. Deep reef: Support massive sponges, whip corals, soft corals and colonial ascidians. |
| Seagrass (approx. 10% of planning area) | Yes | Yes-MP | Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park Oberon Bay, Waterloo Bay, Home Cove, Refuge Cove (<20 m depth) Wilsons Promontory Marine Park Leonard Bay (<20 m depth) | Four species of seagrass have been recorded from four different families. Provides habitat for a variety of invertebrate fauna (eg. isopods, bryozoans, hydroids, sponges, crustaceans) and fish (e.g. Goat Fish). |
| Subtidal soft substrates (approx. 40% of planning area) | Yes | Yes | All sub-tidal surface areas not comprised of seagrass or sub-tidal reef. Depths of 20–50 m. | Bare sand, silt, mud and shell grit, supporting communities of sponges, bryozoans and red algae. |
| Open sea | Yes | Yes | All areas submerged by water and throughout the water column. | Pelagic species include whales (e.g. Southern Right Whale), dolphins, seals (e.g. Australian Fur Seal), turtles (e.g. Leatherback Turtle) and fish (e.g. Barracouta, Great White Shark). Planktonic species include a myriad of microscopic forms and larger animals (e.g. sea jellies). |

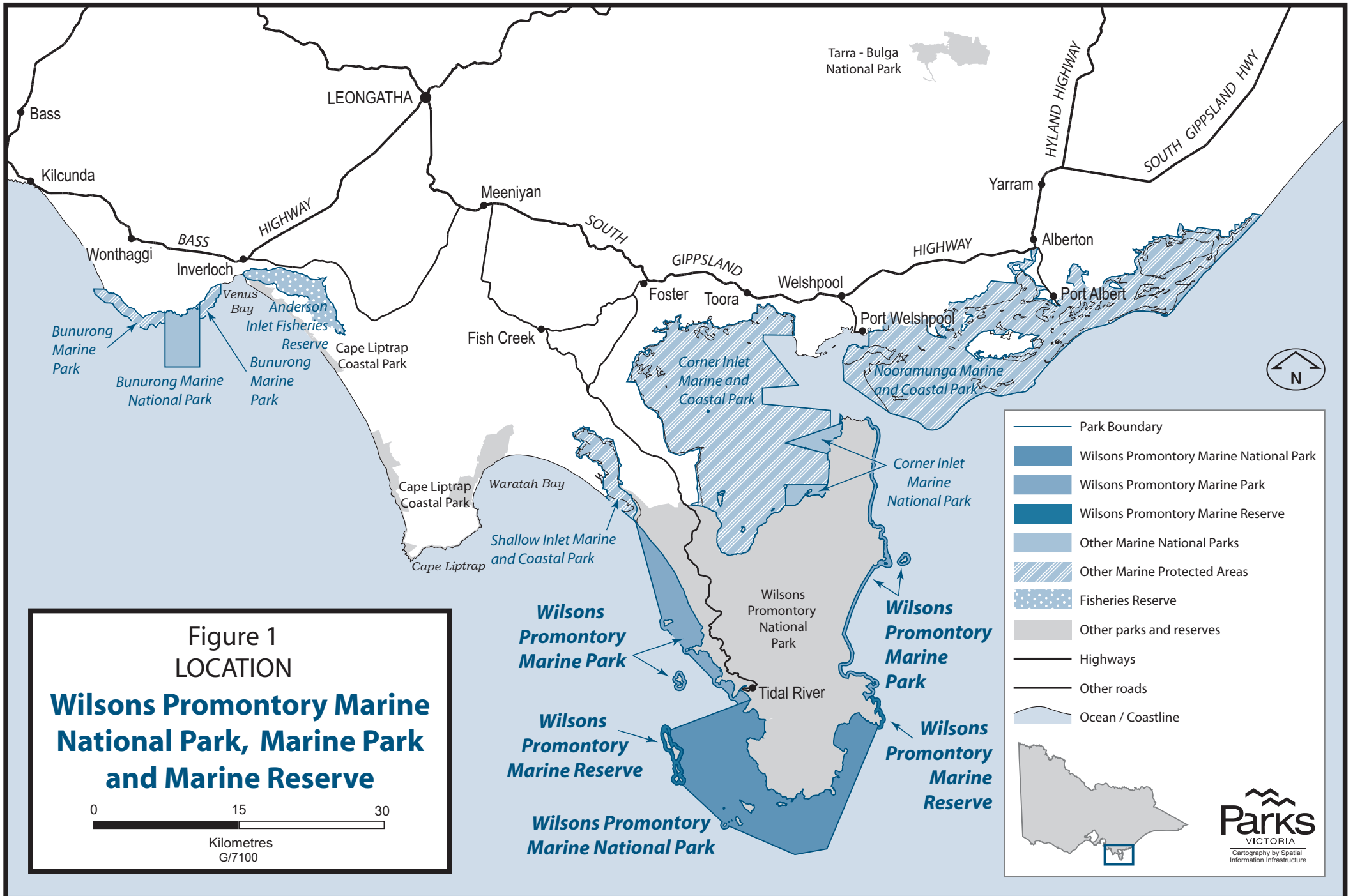
Sources: Wilson et al. 1990; Roob et al. 1999; Edmunds et al. 2003; Parks Victoria 2003a; Plummer et al. 2003; M. Edmunds pers. comm. 2003

APPENDIX 4 SHIPWRECKS AND OTHER CULTURAL HERITAGE PLACES

| NAME | LOCATION | COMMENTS |
|---|---------------------------------|---|
| Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park | | |
| Shipwrecks – Location Known | | |
| <i>Cheviot</i> | Waterloo Bay | Lost on 24 February 1854. Ex whaling vessel. Listed on the Register of the National Estate. |
| <i>Hannah Thomson</i> | Oberon Bay | In 1923 the <i>Bronzewing</i> went ashore in Oberon Bay and the <i>Hannah Thomson</i> was taken around to salvage it. The <i>Hannah Thomson</i> also went ashore and they were both total wrecks. |
| <i>SS Gulf of Carpentaria</i> | Carpentaria Rock | Struck Carpentaria Rock (then uncharted) between Cleft and Anser islands. Sank on 15 September 1885. |
| <i>SS Lady Mildred</i> | 1 km south of Waterloo Point | A 2200 ton screw steamer. Sank in 1909. |
| Unidentified – South Point | South Point | Unknown vessel found at South Point in 1960. May be the 125 ton schooner <i>Favourite</i> , which disappeared in May 1852. |
| Unidentified – Anser Island | South West side of Anser Island | Unknown vessel that may have been a coal carrier. |
| Unidentified - South West Point | South West Point | |
| Shipwrecks – Location Unknown | | |
| <i>Bronzewing</i> | Oberon Bay | In 1923 the <i>Bronzewing</i> went ashore in Oberon Bay and the <i>Hannah Thomson</i> was taken around to salvage it. The <i>Hannah Thomson</i> also went ashore and they were both total wrecks. |
| <i>Gertrude</i> | Waterloo Bay | Artefacts and coal have been found in Waterloo Bay and are believed to indicate the nearby location of the site of the wooden collier barque <i>Gertrude</i> - main site not yet located. |
| <i>Richard and Ann</i> | Waterloo Bay | Wooden schooner sunk in South Waterloo Bay, 1855. |
| <i>Sandra</i> | Oberon Bay | Ketch burnt at anchor in 1947. |
| <i>Sophia</i> | South East Point | Anchored off South East Point Lighthouse carrying building materials. Blown ashore and wrecked on 23 April 1858 during a sudden storm. |
| <i>Trident</i> | Oberon Point | Driven ashore on sand by a gale. Heavily salvaged and refloated twice, but driven ashore on 23 June 1904. |
| Unidentified – Oberon Point | Oberon Point | |
| <i>Valient</i> | Oberon Bay | Ketch blown ashore. |
| Maritime Infrastructure | | |
| Home Cove jetty | Waterloo Bay | Rarely exposed remains of jetty piles – most likely timber-cutting related |
| Refuge Cove archaeological site | Refuge Cove | Includes whalebones, coal, rarely exposed remains of timber jetty piles, debris and artefacts from 19th century activity, shipwrecks and 20th century use. |
| Refuge Cove quarry | Refuge Cove | Intertidal site – evidence of rock drilling, rock removal and landing infrastructure. |
| Sealers Cove jetty | Sealers Cove | Often exposed jetty piles relating to timber-cutting infrastructure. |

Appendix 4 contd.

| NAME | LOCATION | COMMENTS |
|--|---|---|
| Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park contd. | | |
| South East Point Lighthouse dump site | South East Point, east side | Includes dumped debris, building materials and wreckage below landing steps. |
| South East Point Lighthouse landing | South East Point, west side | Mostly intact landing and cargo handling infrastructure site |
| Wilsons Promontory Marine Park | | |
| Shipwrecks – Location Known | | |
| <i>Elm Grove</i> | Five Mile Beach | Driven ashore on sand in a gale. |
| <i>Meg Merrilies</i> | Entrance Point | While carrying a cargo of coal from Tasmania to Port Albert, the brigantine was anchored at Corner Inlet windbound. Forced onto a reef when the anchor chain broke 23 May 1856. |
| <i>Miranda</i> | Miranda Bay | Driven ashore on sand in a gale from anchor. |
| <i>Tomatin</i> | Miranda Bay | Ran ashore in extremely heavy gale. |
| <i>Clyde</i> | Entrance Point | Vessel burnt and sank while at anchor – crew away fishing. |
| Shipwrecks – Location Unknown | | |
| <i>Fury</i> | Rabbit Island | Ran ashore. |
| <i>Lady Young</i> | Entrance Point | Vessel sank on 14 July 1865 in WNW wind on hitting a sandbank. |
| <i>Natal</i> | Sealers Cove | Ran ashore on 11 July 1865 after dragging anchors. |
| <i>Sara Hunter</i> | Tongue Point | Driven ashore on 16 June 1919 after dragging its anchors. |
| <i>Truganina</i> | Refuge Cove | Ran ashore on rocks on 25 November 1842. Some infrastructure salvaged. |
| Strandings | | |
| <i>Alexandra</i> | Rabbit Island | Vessel refloated. |
| <i>Drumblair</i> | Waratah Bay – North of Shellback Island | Vessel refloated. |
| <i>Strathgryfe</i> | North-east of Shellback Island | Vessel refloated. |
| Anchorage: | | |
| Rabbit Island anchorage | Rabbit Island | Fishermen have recovered lost anchors and chains over the years after snagging nets on them. |
| Wilsons Promontory Marine Reserve | | |
| Shipwrecks – Location Unknown | | |
| <i>Curlew</i> | Great Glennie Island | Driven onto rocks off Great Glennie Island on 27 September 1915. |
| <i>Mandarin</i> | Five Mile Beach | Foundered at sea near Five Mile Beach in March 1866. Wreckage found on Five Mile Beach and north of Rabbit Island. |
| <i>Nil Desperandum</i> | Great Glennie Island | Foundered at sea on 22 September 1870. |
| Strandings | | |
| <i>Dandenong</i> | McHugh Island | Stranding only – vessel refloated. |
| Sources: Heritage Victoria (2004); R. Anderson pers. comm. (2004); Love (2003); Jordan (1995); Staniforth (1985); Loney (1982) | | |



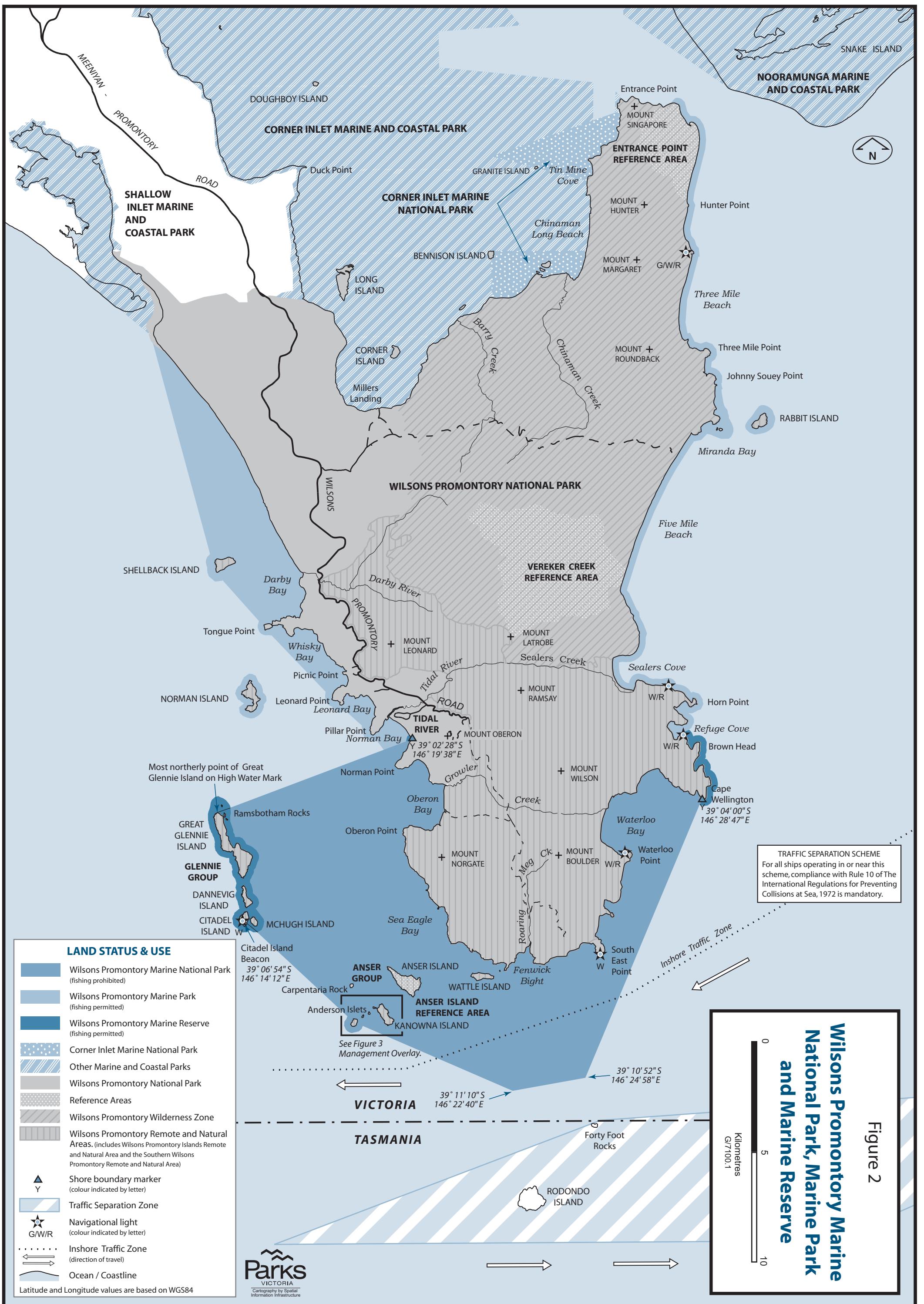
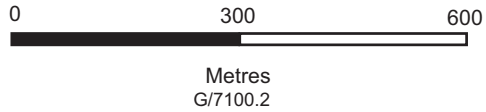






Figure 3 MANAGEMENT OVERLAY

Special Protection Area - Natural Values



-  Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park
-  No vessels within 200 metres of Kanowna Island during November to January (inclusive)
-  No vessels within 50 metres of Kanowna Island during February to October (inclusive)
-  Ocean / Coastline

NB: Special Protection Area Overlay also includes access to exposed intertidal areas on all islands within the planning area, except the beach areas on Great Glennie and Rabbit Islands (section 6.2).

