

NATIONAL PARKS ACT ANNUAL REPORT

2018–19

Acknowledgement of Country

Aboriginal people, through their rich culture, have been connected to the land and sea, for tens of thousands of years. Parks Victoria respectfully acknowledges Aboriginal Traditional Owners, their cultures, knowledge and their continuing connection to and cultural obligation to care for their Country.

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Notes

- During the year the responsible Minister for the Act was the Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP, Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change.
- In this report:
 - *the Act* means the *National Parks Act 1975*
 - *DELWP* means the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
 - *the Minister* means the Minister responsible for administering the Act
 - *the Regulations* means the National Parks Regulations 2013
 - *the Secretary* means the Secretary to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.

Cover image

Greater Bendigo National Park (image: Tanya Smith)

Foreword

This report on the working of the *National Parks Act 1975* (the Act) for the 2018–19 financial year is presented to the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change, the Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP, under section 35 of the Act.

The Act establishes a network of national parks and other protected areas that are representative of Victoria's diverse natural environments and sets out the legal framework for their protection, use and management.

Parks Victoria manages a system of more than 100 parks under the Act totalling approximately 3.46 million hectares on behalf of the Victorian Government, and works in close partnership with the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) in their management.

Notably, this reporting period saw a significant change in the responsibilities under the Act with the commencement of the *Parks Victoria Act 2018* on 12 September 2018. The new Act re-established Parks Victoria as a strengthened and more independent park management agency and transferred statutory responsibilities and powers under the National Parks Act from the Secretary to DELWP to Parks Victoria.

Other highlights of the year included:

- adding 245 hectares of land with high conservation values to Greater Bendigo National Park
- completing first Joint Management Plans in Victoria with the Gunaikurnai and Dhelkunya Dja Traditional Owners Land Management Boards which cover several parks under the Act
- undertaking considerable work aimed at controlling invasive plants and animals, including an increase in efforts to control deer
- significant environmental watering in several parks, including the Alpine, Barmah, Gunbower and Snowy River national parks
- improving visitor facilities in several parks across the state, including as a result of recovery works following natural disasters
- increasing the accessibility provided for people of all abilities through initiatives including the Volunteer Sherpa and TrailRider programs.

Victoria also experienced a protracted and active fire season, with major bushfires impacting many areas managed under the Act including the Alpine and Yarra Ranges national parks, Avon Wilderness Park and Bunyip and Holey Plains state parks.

Parks Victoria looks forward to continuing to work with partner organisations such as DELWP in 2019–20 to ensure that Victoria's splendid parks system continues to be appropriately protected, managed, accessible and enjoyed by an increasing number of visitors.



Jeff Floyd
Chair
Parks Victoria

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A representative parks system

Areas managed under the Act

As at 30 June 2019 there were 139 areas with a total area of approximately 3.46 million hectares managed under various provisions of the Act. Appendix 1 lists the areas and Appendix 2 shows their location.

The 139 areas comprised:

- 124 areas listed on various schedules to the Act
 - 45 national parks (Schedule Two)
 - 3 wilderness parks (Schedule Two A)
 - 26 state parks (Schedule Two B)
 - 5 coastal parks, 3 historic parks, 1 nature conservation reserve, 8 regional parks and Haining Farm (Schedule Three)
 - 3 marine and coastal parks, 2 marine parks, 1 marine reserve, 1 national heritage park and 1 nature conservation reserve (Schedule Four)
 - 13 marine national parks (Schedule Seven)
 - 11 marine sanctuaries (Schedule Eight)
- 15 non-scheduled areas to which particular provisions of the Act apply.

The Act also defines the following areas within particular national parks:

- 19 wilderness zones (Schedule Five) in 7 national parks (see Appendix 1)
- 22 remote and natural areas (Schedule Six) in 12 national parks (see Appendix 1)
- 4 designated water supply catchment areas in the Great Otway, Kinglake and Yarra Ranges national parks.

The only change during the year was the addition of 245 hectares to Greater Bendigo National Park on 5 October 2018. This addition of former freehold land with high conservation values helps to consolidate the significant Kamarooka section of the park.

Management and other planning

As at 30 June 2019 there were approved management plans for all or parts of 45 national parks, 3 wilderness parks, 26 state parks, 20 other parks and reserves, 13 marine national parks and 11 marine sanctuaries.

A highlight of the year was the completion of the inaugural Joint Management Plans in Victoria by the Gunaikurnai and Dhelkunya Dja Traditional Owners Land Management Boards. The *Partnering with Traditional Owners* section of the report includes further information on management planning for jointly managed parks.

The *River Red Gum Parks Management Plan*, referred to in last year's report and covering all or part of five national parks, a state park and four other parks along the Murray, Goulburn and Ovens rivers, was released.

Parks Victoria committed to renew management planning for the Grampians landscape, which includes the Grampians National Park and Black Range State Park as well as several other reserves not under the Act.

Other key planning matters included:

- updating the Cape Conran Coastal Park Master Plan to incorporate challenges to the existing essential infrastructure in the park
- work on amendments to the existing management plan for the Great Otway National Park to incorporate the Anglesea Heath addition to the park.

Managing natural and cultural values

Managing natural values

Strategic priorities for environmental management in areas under the Act are informed by Parks Victoria's State of the Parks Effectiveness Evaluation Program and relevant conservation action plans. These are developed in consultation with Traditional Owners, partner agencies and experts. On-ground works are prioritised to protect the highest environmental values at greatest risk. Examples of projects in the various environmental management program areas are provided below.

Parks Victoria is continuing to roll out conservation action plans for each of Parks Victoria's 18 park landscapes to guide investment in environmental conservation. These plans clearly define conservation outcomes and priority on-ground strategies and actions. They are designed to enable monitoring of landscape health and to guide the evaluation of conservation activities.

Conservation action plans were published for the Grampians and Wimmera landscapes. A plan for the Mallee Landscape was completed, and plans for the River Red Gum and Gippsland Plains and Strzeleckis were drafted for review by stakeholders. Two other plans progressed were the Great Otways, and Western Plains and Wetlands. Scoping and workshopping commenced for the South-East Melbourne and Western Port Landscape.

Threatened species and communities

Parks Victoria and DELWP continued to work with the community and key partner agencies to manage threatened species. This work included programs delivered as part of managing invasive species or habitats.

Examples of activities during the year relating to the management of threatened species and communities include:

- alpine communities – further work to protect alpine bogs and the long-term monitoring plots on the Bogong High Plains, including the famous Maisie's Pretty Valley cattle exclusion plot
- semi-arid woodland community – the second year of a five-year rotating survey of the response of this community to herbivore management in Hattah-Kulkyne, Murray-Sunset and Wyperfeld national parks
- Hooded Plover – fox control in Mornington Peninsula and Point Nepean national parks
- Plains-Wanderer – a fauna survey which detected 32 birds in Terrick Terrick National Park.

Invasive species

Managing invasive species, such as introduced weeds, predators and grazers, is critical to protect native habitats and species that have not evolved to be resilient to the damage that invasive species cause. During the year there was a significant increase in direct investment and resourcing in targeted invasive species programs to address some of the most significant issues in high priority parks.

Landscape-scale conservation programs, often cross-tenure and involving several partner agencies, are the cornerstones of invasive species management in parks.

The Weeds and Pests on Public Land Program includes the long-running Eden, Ark and Mallee Bounceback programs.

The Eden programs aim to control high-threat invasive plants and include several parks within their scope:

- Central Highlands Eden (Baw Baw and Yarra Ranges national parks and Bunyip and Moondarra state parks)
- Glenelg Eden (Cobboboonee, Lower Glenelg and Mount Richmond national parks, Cape Nelson State Park and Discovery Bay Coastal Park)
- Otway Eden (Great Otway and Port Campbell national parks).

The Ark programs involve fox control and include several parks within their scope:

- Barry Mountains fox control project (Alpine National Park)
- Central Highlands Ark (Lake Eildon and Yarra Ranges national parks and Cathedral Range State Park)
- Glenelg Ark (Cobboboonee, Lower Glenelg and Mount Richmond national parks and Discovery Bay Coastal Park)
- Grampians Ark (Grampians National Park)
- Otway Ark (Great Otway National Park)
- Southern Ark (Alfred, Alpine (part) Coopracambra, Croajingolong, Errinundra, Lind and Snowy River national parks, Lake Tyers State Park and Cape Conran Coastal Park).

In addition:

- The Good Neighbour Program continued to invest in controlling invasive species on the public-private land interface.
- The Alps Intensive Management Program and the Hawkweed Eradication Program continued in the Alpine National Park.
- The Mallee Bounceback Program delivered further landscape-scale rabbit control in parks in the Mallee.
- The Peri-urban Weed Management Partnership continued to target areas for weed management in Churchill, Dandenong Ranges, Kinglake, Organ Pipes and Point Nepean national parks and Arthurs Seat and Warrandyte state parks.

Through the state government's Biodiversity Response Planning initiative, Parks Victoria was successful in being awarded funding over three years to deliver priority landscape scale programs across the state. These included projects in the following parks:

- Hattah-Kulkyne and Murray-Sunset national parks – increased investment to protect biodiversity
- Alpine National Park – to control deer and feral cats
- Grampians National Park – to control Sallow Wattle and feral cats, feral goats, deer and rabbits
- Wilsons Promontory National Park – to control feral cats, foxes and Sambar deer.

The *Protection of the Alpine National Park–Feral Horse Strategic Action Plan 2018–2021* was released during the year and operational delivery of the plan commenced.

The draft *Strategic Action Plan: Protection of floodplain marshes in Barmah National Park and Barmah Forest Ramsar site 2019–2023* was released for public consultation, with significant levels of community engagement. The plan includes a program to deal with major threats to Barmah National Park, including the control and removal of feral horses and other invasive animals, and proposed changes to the flooding regimes.

An increase in deer control statewide has been a priority in response to community concern about expanding populations of deer and the increasing impacts in parks. Deer control was increased in the Alpine and Grampians national parks through an increase in targeted professional aerial and ground shooting programs, and programs were funded to deliver significant increases in deer removal from Barmah and Wilsons Promontory national parks.

Parks Victoria continued to work with the Australian Deer Association and the Sporting Shooters Association of Australia (Victoria) using volunteer hunters to help control deer, feral goats and foxes. Projects included those in the following national parks: Alpine (Sambar deer), Dandenong Ranges (Sambar deer), Murray-Sunset (feral goats) and Wilsons Promontory (Hog deer).

Information on the control of marine pests can be found in the *Managing Marine Values* section of the report.

Native animals

Long-term programs to manage the impact of overabundant kangaroo and koala populations continued in several parks. Excessive numbers threaten habitats and can result in animal welfare issues. The programs are underpinned by established species management plans developed with the support of key stakeholders, including technical advisory committees.

Red and Western Grey Kangaroos were again controlled in Hattah-Kulkyne, Murray-Sunset and Wyperfeld national parks as part of managing the total grazing pressure on the parks from kangaroos, goats and rabbits to protect regenerating woodland habitats.

Native grazers were controlled at Wilsons Promontory National Park to reduce grazing pressure on native habitats, and at Woodlands Historic Park to improve the habitat in the enclosure of the captive breeding colony of the Eastern Barred Bandicoot.

Overabundant koalas in Budj Bim National Park continued to be managed through the use of contraceptive implants. There were 85 koalas captured and treated.

Habitat restoration

In addition to programs to control overabundant native animals, programs during the year to restore habitat through the control of invasive weeds and pest animals included:

- Alpine and Dandenong Ranges national parks – the control of deer to reduce their impacts on wet forests and alpine peatlands
- Grampians National Park – the delivery of a program to control introduced grazers to protect threatened vegetation communities and encourage natural restoration of habitats damaged by deer and goats
- Wilsons Promontory National Park – the continuation of the program to restore coastal grassy woodlands, including the control of exotic and native grazers in the park.

Environmental water

In 2018–19 Parks Victoria continued to work in partnership with catchment management authorities, waterway managers and the Environmental Water Holder to support the environmental watering program by contributing to the planning and approval of proposed activities in the Alpine, Snowy River, Barmah, Gunbower, Lower Goulburn and Murray-Sunset national parks.

Of particular relevance were the following watering events:

- Alpine and Snowy River national parks
Releases made from Lake Jindabyne (in NSW) into the Snowy River included five high-flow peaks, as well as periods of low flow. The releases help restore the ecological processes that support aquatic habitats and productivity.
- Barmah National Park
The second trial of ‘translucent regulator’ operations meant that forest regulators remained open in July-August and November-December to enable water to enter the forest with a more natural rise and fall, in line with changes in the level of the Murray River. This operation maintained the inundation of Floodplain Marshland vegetation and supported the growth of Moira grass.

There was also a sustained diversion of water through Barmah Forest between August and December to meet the needs of downstream water orders, and some additional environmental water delivered in November and December to maximise the inundation area of the Floodplain Marshlands during the peak growth period of Moira grass. Two natural flood peaks occurred in September and in mid-December.

- Gunbower National Park

A total of 48 gigalitres of environmental water was delivered through the park between July and September 2018. Much of this water returns to the Murray River transporting carbon and providing opportunities for fish to move on and off the floodplain.

Flows through the Lower Goulburn National Park largely remained within the channel of the Goulburn River, with the exception of a spring fill of Reedy Swamp.

No environmental flows were delivered to Hattah-Kulkyne National Park this year as this site had received inundation through a combination of natural flooding and environmental watering in previous years and was undergoing a drying phase. Within Murray-Sunset National Park, Websters Lagoon and Lake Wallawalla remained inundated due to a combination of previous or top-up environmental water deliveries.

Marine values

Marine pests, including exotic species and overabundant native species, continue to pose a significant threat to marine biodiversity in marine protected areas.

Two species of native sea urchins are currently being managed within several marine protected areas across the state including Cape Howe Marine National Park, Beware Reef and Point Cooke marine sanctuaries and Nooramunga Marine and Coastal Park. In Cape Howe Marine National Park, increasing numbers of urchins have resulted in a significant loss of seagrass or kelp forests and the creation of bare urchin barrens.

Projects have taken an adaptive management approach in order to learn about different methods for controlling these overabundant natives (including direct culling), and have involved partnerships with the Victorian Fisheries Authority and commercial fishers, who have removed urchins from the park.

In November 2018 Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park received the Global Ocean Refuge Platinum Award by the US-based Marine Conservation Institute. This award was granted following Parks Victoria's nomination which considered the values of the park, management strategies, science, partnerships, and community engagement. The marine national park is now one of only six sites globally to be recognised with the platinum status.

Monitoring natural values

Monitoring is a fundamental part of park management. It is essential for understanding the state of our natural values and what threatens them, as well as evaluating how effectively those threats and the conservation and protection of Victoria's special places are being addressed. This leads to an ongoing improvement in effectiveness by highlighting where we are doing well and where we can improve.

Terrestrial environments

Monitoring natural values in terrestrial environments during the year included:

- Chiltern Mt Pilot and Murray-Sunset national parks and Deep Lead Nature Conservation Reserve (No. 1) – citizen science partnerships targeting fauna monitoring and inventory
- Mornington Peninsula, Point Nepean and Wilsons Promontory national parks – monitoring assemblages of ground-dwelling mammals
- Alpine National Park – the continued monitoring and rehabilitation of threatened alpine peatlands
- Terrick Terrick National Park – monitoring the condition of grassland habitat and populations of threatened grassland fauna.

The monitoring of environmental threats included:

- Cobboboonee, Coopracambra, Croajingolong, Grampians, Great Otway, Lower Glenelg, Snowy River and Yarra Ranges national parks – the responses of foxes to landscape baiting programs through various Ark projects, which also monitor threatened mammal species which are subject to fox predation
- Hattah-Kulkyne, Little Desert, Murray-Sunset and Wyperfeld national parks – the occurrence of foxes and feral cats, in conjunction with the Victorian Malleefowl Recovery Group
- Errinundra, Grampians and Warby-Ovens national parks – exotic weeds and invasive native plants
- Alpine National Park – aerial counts of feral horses, as part of a cross-border collaboration with Kosciuszko National Park in New South Wales
- Barmah National Park – the use of aerial-mounted thermal imaging to monitor feral horses
- Warby-Ovens National Park – the impact of Cinnamon Fungus on vegetation communities.

DELWP's Victorian Forests Monitoring Program provides a platform to assess and monitor the health and condition of Victoria's public forests, support policy and management decisions and to meet its reporting obligations. A further eleven plots were established during the year in areas under the Act and several re-measured.

Marine environments

The monitoring of marine environments included:

- Point Addis, Wilsons Promontory, Cape Howe and Port Phillip Heads marine national parks –targeted monitoring using innovative and standard techniques
- Bunurong and Wilsons Promontory marine national parks – a trial of new Rapid Health Assessment monitoring techniques
- Port Phillip Heads Marine National Park – the commencement of the analysis of seagrass and saltmarsh communities using satellite imagery.

Researching natural values

Research authorisations

Research, study and investigation in areas on the schedules to the Act are authorised under section 20 or 21A of the Act, sometimes in conjunction with a permit under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*, the *Reference Areas Act 1978* or the *Wildlife Act 1975*.

A total of 206 research permits were issued during the year: 109 new permits and 97 renewed permits. The permits enabled research to be carried out in 103 parks (a permit may cover more than one park) or in all parks if required (15 permits).

The parks for which 10 or more permits were issued (in addition to the 'all parks' permits) were: Alpine (32), Baw Baw (13), Croajingolong (10), Dandenong Ranges (12), Grampians (18), Great Otway (33), Kinglake (10), Little Desert (11), Murray-Sunset (15), Snowy River (13), Wilsons Promontory (20) and Yarra Ranges (21) national parks and Bunyip State Park (19).

Research authorised under the permits included:

- several parks in eastern Victoria – a seismic survey to gain new information on the nature of the Earth's crust along a line through eastern Victoria
- Warby-Ovens National Park and Kooyoorra State Park – research to investigate the causes of the dieback of Blakely's Red Gum
- several parks in north-west Victoria and Gippsland – surveys of invertebrate fauna
- French Island National Park – research as part of monitoring populations of feral cats and wildlife on French Island
- Jawbone Marine Sanctuary – research involving measuring several snail species to investigate human impacts on the intertidal shorelines of north-west Port Phillip Bay.

Research programs

Parks Victoria's highly successful Research Partners Panel facilitates collaborative research to answer important questions and improve park management.

During 2018–19 there were 18 new projects initiated in areas under the Act, and many other multi-year projects continued, to address critical knowledge gaps. This work was in addition to the hundreds of research projects supported by Parks Victoria each year through the research permit system.

Research Partners projects cover a diverse range of issues and involve expert researchers and students from the partner institutions. Projects involving terrestrial environments during the year included:

- Alpine, Grampians and Yarra Ranges national parks – examining the impacts of fire and vegetation recovery
- Great Otway National Park – continued collaboration with Deakin University to understand the status of endangered mammal species in the heathlands of the park, including new research to identify key habitat refuges
- Terrick Terrick National Park – work with the University of Melbourne and fire management experts to explore and develop strategies for the potential future application of ecological and cultural fire in northern plains grasslands
- Wyperfeld National Park – investigations relating to improved seedling survival of the threatened Buloke in collaboration with the University of Melbourne.

Projects involving marine environments included:

- updating monitoring protocols for intertidal and subtidal reef monitoring (applicable to all marine national parks and marine sanctuaries)
- Bunurong and Wilsons Promontory marine national parks – bathymetry and habitat mapping.

Managing cultural values

Aboriginal cultural heritage

Parks Victoria continued to manage Aboriginal cultural heritage values in parks across the state. Procedures for assessing risks to cultural heritage have been strengthened and new tools developed to help park managers identify and protect Aboriginal cultural heritage values.

Key projects undertaken during the year included the continuation of a collaborative project in north-western Victoria to undertake Traditional Owner-led on-ground protection of Aboriginal ancestral remains and cultural heritage places.

Delivered in a partnership between Parks Victoria, First People of the Millewa-Mallee Aboriginal Corporation and People and Parks Foundation, the Resting Places project:

- undertook significant restoration works at two burial grounds in Murray-Sunset National Park
- commenced a two-year project to build the capacity of the Registered Aboriginal Party, model and prioritise work in the landscape, and secure significant funding to work at a larger scale in the future.

There was considerable work undertaken in relation to conserving rock art in various parks, including:

- progress on the systematic assessment of known rock art sites, including completion of 30 condition assessments, most of which were undertaken in the Grampians National Park
- additional multiple assessments as part of the effort to monitor the impact of activities in the Grampians National Park, resulting in the rediscovery of 2 rock art sites, 28 quarries and 5 artefact scatters
- protection and restoration works at several rock art shelters in the Grampians National Park
- significant collaboration and negotiation between Traditional Owners and Parks Victoria in relation to access and activities in parks where Aboriginal cultural heritage values are present, in preparation for landscape management planning which will determine longer-term access and use arrangements.

The work relating to rock art has been most prominent in the Grampians National Park, where values are highly concentrated. Parks Victoria has been working with Traditional Owner groups, park users, tour operators and other stakeholders on managing the impacts of recreation, particularly rock climbing, on Aboriginal cultural values, and natural values, in the park's Special Protection Areas.

Historic heritage

The management of historic heritage in parks during the year included the following:

- Point Nepean National Park
 - A project involving park-wide interpretation and storytelling at Point Nepean, including conservation and repair of the historic Disinfecting Complex, was announced, and the development of the associated strategy and implementation plan neared completion.
 - Documentation of conservation and repair works required for buildings at the Disinfecting Complex at the Quarantine Station (Foul Luggage Store and Boiler House) was completed.
- Mount Buffalo Chalet
 - Minor works, maintenance and compliance were undertaken.

Other work undertaken in relation to managing historic heritage included:

- an assessment of the condition of historic heritage assets using the Heritage Asset Management App in order to document the condition of the fabric of twelve substantial heritage assets (buildings) and to estimate the cost of repairs and catch-up maintenance
- the development and adoption of Parks Victoria's *Historic Places Strategic Framework and Action Plan 2019–2022*, which prioritises investment and activation of key historic places. Including those in parks under the Act.

Managing fire and other emergencies

Managing fire

Bushfires

The 2018–19 bushfire season commenced early with the first major fire reported at Cape Conran Coastal Park in August 2018. Dry conditions persisted through spring and into summer that resulted in an above average fire season.

A total of 896 fires were recorded as starting in areas under the Act and these burnt an area of 31 971 hectares. The vast majority of these fires were controlled at a size of less than 5 hectares. Several large fires starting outside parks also impacted parks.

A total area of 101 213 hectares was burnt in areas under the Act during the year. The parks most affected were the Alpine National Park (43 241 ha), Avon Wilderness Park (37 207 ha), Bunyip State Park (9421 ha) and Holey Plains State Park (8717 ha).

Parks Victoria worked with DELWP to manage some of the major fires in remote areas and to implement control strategies that minimised impacts to biodiversity values, particularly alpine bogs and rainforest.

Planned burning

Dry conditions in early autumn delayed the start of the autumn planned burning program. Following rain in mid-April, conditions for burning improved. Favourable conditions in May saw opportunities for a large, later than usual program of burning across the state.

There were 48 burns completed in areas under the Act, treating a total area of 52 650 hectares. These included:

- burns in the Alpine (38 500 ha), Grampians (3100 ha), Kara Kara (just over 700 ha), Little Desert (1300 ha) and Murray-Sunset (1500 ha) national parks and the Big Desert Wilderness Park (1200 ha)
- several burns totalling approximately 2700 hectares in the Great Otway National Park, which reduced bushfire risk to some coastal communities along the Great Ocean Road
- Dyrurit Walpa, a Traditional Owner-led burn by the Wotjobaluk Peoples at Mount Arapiles-Tooan State Park.

Melbourne Fire and Emergency Program

The Melbourne Fire and Emergency Program aims to improve bushfire preparedness in Melbourne's urban areas. This year the program included Churchill and Dandenong Ranges national parks, Bunyip (prior to the bushfire in March 2019) and Arthurs Seat state parks and Lysterfield Park.

Activities completed in areas under the Act again included works on fuel break, slashing and maintenance, significant road upgrades to improve access for fire vehicles, preparing planned burn edges, mechanical modification of bushfire fuel and delivering pest plant control works post-burn and mechanical works as part of an ongoing program to improve vegetation condition to offset native vegetation losses from previous fuel break works.

There was also a significant program of community engagement aimed at promoting fire safety behaviour and community education.

Planning, monitoring and research

Planning

The strategic bushfire management planning process developed under the Safer Together program and begun in 2017–18 continued, jointly undertaken by DELWP, Parks Victoria, Country Fire Authority and Emergency Management Victoria staff, as well as other community and sector partners.

The new bushfire management strategies being developed as part of this process will guide fuel management on public land, including in areas under the Act, as well as prioritise where to begin working with communities for fuel management on private land, to most effectively reduce bushfire risk. They are due for completion in 2019–20.

The principal focus of this round of strategic planning is the creation of cross-tenure fuel management strategies for each of the six Victorian Government regions which aim to fulfil a number of objectives, including reducing the risk from bushfire to life and property, building ecological resilience and protecting cultural heritage.

Monitoring

There were again several bushfire Monitoring Evaluation and Reporting (MER) projects in areas under the Act. These provide valuable information to inform bushfire management planning.

Pre- and post-fire fuel hazard monitoring was undertaken to determine the effectiveness of planned burning. A significant component of the MER program is an ecosystem resilience monitoring program. This was initiated in 2017–18 as a pilot involving monitoring habitat and fauna at 106 sites in the Grampians and Greater Bendigo national parks and Lerderderg State Park. This scientifically-based program aims to establish 2200 sites in native vegetation on public land by 2025.

In addition, two projects relating to ecosystem resilience continued in the following parks:

- Barmah National Park – an assessment of different mitigation techniques for protecting significant habitat and cultural River Red Gum trees in relation to planned burning operations

- Yarra Ranges National Park – the monitoring of fire effects on fire-sensitive threatened species, such as Leadbeater’s Possum.

The outputs from these projects will be used to inform improved strategic bushfire management planning.

Research

Parks Victoria established a ‘Fire and biodiversity – impacts, recovery and future planning’ research project, funded through the Victorian Government’s Safer Together program and involving sub-projects across seven parks under the Act (see Table 1).

The science-based outputs from these projects will increase our understanding of the effects of bushfire and planned burning on ecosystem resilience, and will be used to inform improved strategic bushfire management planning and bushfire recovery.

Table 1 – Fire and biodiversity – impacts, recovery and future planning – research sub-projects

PV region	Park	Activity
Western Victoria	Budj Bim National Park (NP) Mount Napier State Park	Refine the tolerable fire intervals for forested Stony Rises Woodland Ecological Vegetation Class and develop a preferred fire regime based on scientific evidence.
	Grampians NP	Understand the effectiveness of small patch size burning in providing habitat for fire sensitive small mammals.
	Great Otway NP	Develop improved spatial distribution maps of small mammal refuges in the Otway Ranges.
Northern Victoria	Terrick Terrick NP	Build on the existing northern plains grasslands knowledge base and Traditional Owner and stakeholder expertise to develop evidence-based objectives for the management and application of ecological fire.
Eastern Victoria	Alpine NP	Develop decision-support tools to guide management interventions to enhance the persistence of Alpine Ash forests subject to fire and climate change disturbance. Collect floristic fire response data from long-term alpine monitoring plots. This data will contribute to understanding threats to fire-sensitive environments and inform future management actions required to conserve subalpine and montane forests.
Melbourne Metropolitan	Yarra Ranges NP	Determine the dynamics of post-fire regeneration of Cool Temperate Rainforest, the influence of pre-fire overstorey composition and fire severity on those dynamics, and the extent rainforest is likely to persist.

Managing recovery from bushfires and other emergencies

Recovery programs for bushfire and storm events continued throughout the year, including finalisation of programs from 2014, as well as new emergencies resulting in new programs:

- Grampians National Park bushfire (2014) – A 4-year \$4 million program was completed.
- Wye River-Jamieson Track bushfire (2015) (impacting Great Otway National Park) – Following community consultation the \$3.4 million program was approved. Completed works include Bioscan, Sheoak Falls and weed management. Work commenced on the walking track from Wye River to Separation Creek and preparing contracts for the upgrade of Jamieson campground and lookouts.
- floods and storms (2016–17) – Nine separate storm and flood events between July 2016 and December 2017 affected numerous areas under the Act, including the Alpine, Brisbane Ranges, Churchill, Dandenong Ranges, Grampians, Great Otway, Kinglake, Lake Eildon, Little Desert, Lower Glenelg, Murray-Sunset, Organ Pipes and Yarra Ranges national parks, some of which were impacted multiple times.

The more than \$10 million recovery program is nearing the final stages of delivery. Badger Weir in the Yarra Ranges National Park was re-opened during the year and most minor works across all sites have now been completed.

Works are to be released for tender for the following new recovery programs:

- storms (December 2017) – Alpine, Kinglake and Lake Eildon national parks and Cathedral Range State Park
- Cathedral Range State Park bushfire (March 2018).

The following events occurred during the reporting period and are currently the subject of impact, risk assessments and funding:

- floods and storms (December 2018) – Chiltern-Mount Pilot, Croajingolong, Greater Bendigo, Snowy River and Warby-Ovens national parks
- bushfires (January–March 2019) – Alpine, Morwell and Yarra Ranges national parks and Bunyip and Holey Plains state parks.

Encouraging visitors, tourism and community involvement

Enhancing visitor enjoyment and tourism

Parks Victoria continued to improve visitor and tourist access and enjoyment while maintaining park values and reducing risks.

Works to enhance visitor enjoyment and increase nature-based tourism opportunities included:

- Grampians National Park

There was progress on Stage Two of the Grampians Peaks Trail, a world-class walking experience of 160 kilometres, which can be enjoyed in sections or one 13-day walk, with upgrades now completed to approximately 60 kilometres of existing trail.

Works this year focussed on clearing and constructing priority sections of trail that will open in Autumn 2020. Works to construct hiker camps were tendered and evaluated, and the trail construction tender awarded.

An expression of interest for Traditional Owner rangers to guide visitors and share their cultural knowledge of Country resulted in 16 applicants, with a Walk on Country in March.

- Great Otway National Park

Funding of \$2.5 million was announced in September 2018 to improve visitor facilities in the 100 000-hectare park, one of Victoria's largest and most important environmental and tourism locations.

Works include the following:

- Maits Rest – contracts for design and works were tendered and awarded – receiving 150 000 visitors each year, the popular short walk will be upgraded to a contemporary design that will improve access to key features including the boardwalk, pedestrian bridges and viewing platform
- Melba Gully – a new BBQ and a picnic shelter were constructed to enhance the visitor experience and enable greater visitation. Melba Gully will also provide a rainforest walk experience with glow worms at night while the works at Maits Rest are undertaken.

- Mount Buffalo National Park

Minor works, maintenance, compliance and planning for delivery of improvements to the Gorge Day Visitor Area were undertaken at Mount Buffalo this year.

- Port Campbell National Park

Designs to implement Stage One of the Shipwreck Coast Master Plan were finalised following community engagement and construction works tendered.

The contract to construct the Port Campbell Creek Pedestrian Bridge was awarded; the bridge will facilitate a year-round connection between the Port Campbell township and the Discovery Trail in Port Campbell National Park.

Planning was completed for the waste water and potable water pipeline project, which will connect the Twelve Apostles Visitor Centre and the Port Campbell Treatment Plant, and construction works tendered.

- Wilsons Promontory National Park

A new wastewater treatment plant was installed at Tidal River in late 2018, with water quality testing every quarter undertaken to ensure improvements and adherence to EPA conditions; the works have resulted in significant water savings.

Asbestos was removed from the roofs of buildings at the Wilsons Promontory Lighthouse, a new wastewater treatment plant was installed and the drinking water system was upgraded.

- Arthurs Seat State Park

Rehabilitation works at the lower station carpark were completed and designs for the interpretive centre, play space and lower station overflow carpark, as well as permit applications and cultural heritage investigations, commenced.

- Bay of Islands Coastal Park

Following a significant escarpment collapse that compromised the safety of the former beach access steps at Childers Cove, the lower section of stairway was removed and an alternative relocated elevated stairway constructed to provide safe access to the beach for visitors.

During the year, glamping (glamorous camping) was trialled at Lake Eildon and Mount Buffalo national parks.

For the first time, Parks Victoria presented events as part of the Australian Heritage Festival, including in the Alpine, Mount Buffalo and Point Nepean national parks.

Licensed tour operators

Tour operators are licensed to run organised tours and recreational activities for profit on Victorian public land. As at 30 June 2019 there were 414 operators licensed to operate in areas under the Act.

Visits to parks

Parks Victoria's latest Visitor Number Monitor estimated that there were 49.6 million visits to national and state parks in 2018–19. This is a 17 per cent increase from 42.3 million visits in 2016–17.

Port Campbell National Park remains one of the most highly visited parks in Victoria, with the Twelve Apostles receiving just over 2 million visits in 2018–19.

Point Nepean National Park has seen significant increases in visitation, with 590 000 visits in 2018–19, up 20 per cent on 2017–18.

Supporting visitors with disabilities

Parks Victoria continued its work to ensure parks are more accessible for people with a disability and to encourage greater inclusion. During the year:

- Parks Victoria partnered with the YMCA to deliver a program at Wilsons Promontory National Park to support spinal cord injured/wheelchair users to camp in tents and learn how better to access the outdoors. Use of the TrailRider Sherpa program and beach wheelchairs facilitated trail and beach access.
- The Volunteer Sherpa and TrailRider program for people with mobility issues was expanded at the Dandenong Ranges and Grampians national parks.
- The Walk in the Park partnership with Blind Sports Australia to encourage vision impaired visitors to experience nature included a camp at the Grampians National Park and walks at Tarra-Bulga National Park.
- Social Scripts were delivered at Wilsons Promontory National Park to assist children on the Autism Spectrum in having a fun and enjoyable park experience.

Parks for health and wellbeing

A variety of activities were carried out to reduce barriers and encourage new visitors to parks for physical and mental health:

- A guided Welcome Walks initiative was implemented at Lysterfield Park in partnership with Bushwalking Victoria and the Southern Migrant Resource Centre. This initiative was designed to provide a guided, safe and secure introductory walking experience to 'new' park visitors and attracted culturally diverse groups including new migrants and refugees.
- Parks Victoria partnered with the South-Eastern Melbourne Primary Health Network at Lysterfield Park to commence a new social prescriptions program to encourage groups to engage in nature through social connection.
- A new program of guided nature walks was implemented in a wide range of parks to encourage 'steps into nature' for families and others. Parks Victoria partnered with the Premier's Active Ageing initiative in April 2019 to create the Very Big Bush Walk which was held simultaneously at parks including Barmah, Brisbane Ranges, Dandenong Ranges, Great Otway, Kinglake, Morwell and Wilsons Promontory national parks and Castlemaine Diggings National Heritage Park.

Informing, interpreting and educating

Information, interpretation and education services relating to areas under the Act were provided to encourage visits, manage risks, increase knowledge and understanding of parks and biodiversity, and encourage visitors to develop a stronger connection with the environment.

Information about parks continued to be provided to the public through Parks Victoria's information service (13 1963), the Parks Victoria website, social media and Park Notes and Visitor Guides.

Face-to-face interpretation and education activities were delivered to 22 176 adults and children in 51 parks. This included engagement with 8150 students at 28 parks.

Junior Ranger program

The Junior Ranger program continued to expand during the year due to community engagement and seasonal park rangers delivering a significant portion of the program. The increase was also due to activities being delivered during the school term in addition to the usual school holidays. This allowed activities to be themed around occasions such as World Oceans Day and World Ranger Day.

This year's Junior Ranger program included a number of activities that were successfully cross-promoted with programs offered by external networks, including the Premier's Active April and the Kids in Nature Network.

Additionally, in January 2019 a number of activities were delivered as a partnership between Parks Victoria and Coastcare Victoria's annual coastal and marine activity program, Summer by the Sea. The program included activities in coastal and marine areas protected under the Act.

In 2018–19 the Junior Ranger Program was delivered to 10 021 participants (including children and adults) at 46 parks under the Act.

Digital nature education

The first statewide curriculum-aligned primary school program was designed and trialled during the year. The Park Explorers program was designed to increase participation in learning outdoors for low socio-economic and regional schools. In 2018–19 the trials supported learning in nature at Point Nepean and Wilsons Promontory national parks and Kings Billabong Park.

Volunteers

A wide range of volunteers, including Friends groups, community organisations, Landcare, research and recreational user groups as well as individuals, again made a very significant contribution to the management of many areas under the Act during the year. They provided a diversity of services such as research, natural values and cultural heritage restoration, visitor services and asset management.

The involvement of volunteers in citizen science continued to grow, with many important contributions across the state, including Sea Search and the Reef Life Survey.

The Australian Deer Association and Sporting Shooters Association of Australia (Victoria) continued to provide valuable support for several projects relating to managing invasive species.

Parks Victoria's Campground Host program was implemented at Croajingolong, Grampians, Great Otway, Kinglake, Lake Eildon and Mount Buffalo national parks, as well as Cathedral Range, Kooyoora and Lerderderg state parks.

A new pilot program of volunteer park guides in the Alpine National Park (at Wallace Hut) attracted nearly 3000 volunteer hours over 13 days and engaged more than 1000 visitors.

The Volunteer Track Ranger program, involving nearly 100 volunteers, was implemented in 14 parks, including the Alpine, Baw Baw, Croajingolong Grampians, Great Otway, Kinglake, Lake Eildon, Wilsons Promontory, Mornington Peninsula and Mount Buffalo national parks and Cathedral Range, Lerderderg and Kooyoora state parks. The program has become so popular that volunteer placements are oversubscribed by nearly 20 per cent.

Partnering with Traditional Owners

Parks Victoria and DELWP continued to work with Traditional Owners across the state to implement joint and co-operative management arrangements and to support the involvement of Traditional Owners in park management.

Joint management

Implementation of joint management continued for parks under the Act with the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation (north central Victoria), the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (Gippsland) and the Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation (Barmah National Park).

Of particular note was the release during the year of Victoria's first two joint management plans, developed jointly with the two Traditional Owner Land Management Boards: the *Gunaikurnai Joint Management Plan* and the *Joint Management Plan for the Dja Dja Wurrung Parks*. These plans will guide how government and Traditional Owners will work together to incorporate the knowledge and culture of Traditional Owners into management of the joint managed areas, which include 10 areas under the National Parks Act.

A draft Joint Management Plan for Barmah National Park was also developed by the Yorta Yorta Traditional Owner Land Management Board, for release for public consultation in 2019–20.

In addition to management planning, joint management activities undertaken in partnership with Traditional Owners included the following:

- Dja Dja Wurrung parks (Greater Bendigo and most of Kara Kara national parks and Kooyoora and Paddys Ranges state parks)
 - cultural heritage assessments in Greater Bendigo and Kara Kara national parks and Kooyoora State Park
 - predictive cultural heritage modelling and preliminary archaeological investigations in Paddys Ranges State Park
 - targeted protection works on a fallen scar tree in Kara Kara National Park
 - expansion of the Dja Dja Wurrung cultural heritage team
 - cultural education for schools, junior ranger groups, Friends groups and state agencies
 - pest plant and animal works across the jointly managed parks
 - infrastructure development, including road works and campground improvements in Greater Bendigo National Park and the construction of a shelter in Kooyoora State Park.
- Gunaikurnai parks (Mitchell River, Tarra-Bulga, The Lakes and Snowy River (New Guinea Caves) national parks, Lake Tyers State Park and Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park)
 - engaging with Gunaikurnai Traditional Owners and the broader community on the Lake Tyers Camping and Access Strategy
 - cultural mapping and analysis of historical records for Lake Tyers State Park
 - pest plant and animal control in Mitchell River National Park, Lake Tyers State Park and Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park
 - maintenance of visitor and camping areas and walking tracks across the jointly managed parks, with considerable effort put into managing visitor access to areas of sensitivity
 - installation of joint management signage, including at the Tarra-Bulga Visitor Information Centre.

Co-operative management

Parks Victoria continued to work co-operatively with the Budj Bim Council and the Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation in the management of Budj Bim National Park. The Budj Bim cultural landscape was assessed during the year for inclusion in the UNESCO World Heritage List.¹

Collaboration with the Barengi Gadjin Land Council Aboriginal Corporation in the management of Little Desert and Wyperfeld national parks, Mount Arapiles-Toosan State Park and Lake Albacutya Park continued.

Other Traditional Owner partnerships

Parks Victoria continued to work closely with Traditional Owner groups across the state to manage cultural landscapes and on several priority Aboriginal cultural heritage conservation projects focusing on protecting ancestral burial sites and conserving rock art (see *Managing Aboriginal heritage*).

Parks Victoria worked with Eastern Maar Traditional Owners to co-design three precincts identified in the Shipwreck Coast Master Plan, with the aim of increasing visitor connection to Port Campbell National Park and the Twelve Apostles Marine National Park. The collaboration identified innovative ways to express connection to Country and traditional knowledge through the design of built infrastructure.

A recognition and settlement agreement under the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010* between the Victorian Government and Taungurung Traditional Owners was finalised and is awaiting commencement. It includes the granting of Aboriginal Title for seven areas under the National Parks Act: Alpine National Park (part), Heathcote-Graytown, Kinglake, Lake Eildon and Mount Buffalo national parks and Cathedral Range and Mount Samaria state parks.

¹ The site was inscribed on the World Heritage List on 6 July 2019. This is the first Australian site listed exclusively for its Aboriginal cultural values.

Supporting park management

Management arrangements

Prior to 12 September 2018, the Secretary was responsible under the Act for ensuring that the parks and other areas to which the Act applies were controlled and managed in accordance with the Act. Parks Victoria was responsible through a management agreement for managing these parks and other areas on behalf of the Secretary.

On 12 September 2018, the *Parks Victoria Act 2018* commenced and transferred the Secretary's statutory responsibilities and powers under the National Parks Act to Parks Victoria (see *Legislation*).

DELWP continues to work with Parks Victoria and provides strategic policy advice to the Minister and the Secretary.

Parks Victoria's 2018–19 business plan sets out the management services and strategic priorities to be delivered for the year. Its annual report contains information on the organisation and its operations for the year. DELWP and other organisations also contributed to the parks program during the year.

Legislation

Amendments to the Act

Parks Victoria Act 2018

This Act came into operation on 12 September 2018. It re-established Parks Victoria as a strengthened and more independent park management agency with specific objects, expanded functions and direct land management powers and responsibilities.

The new Act contains several tools to assist Parks Victoria in its management of parks and reserves, including:

- requiring Parks Victoria to prepare a statewide land management strategy that sets out the general long-term directions, strategies and priorities for the protection, management and use of the land it manages (including the areas managed under the National Parks Act and it must be consistent with that Act) – work commenced on this during the year
- enabling Parks Victoria to prepare land management plans for the land it manages which may cover more than one park or reserve. The preparation of such plans will, if applicable, be considered to have met the requirement to prepare a management plan under the National Parks Act.

The new Act made many consequential amendments to the National Parks Act, including:

- making Parks Victoria statutorily responsible for the control and management of the parks and other areas under the National Parks Act and for exercising various functions and powers
- repealing the provisions relating to park advisory committees and the Alpine Advisory Committee (Parks Victoria can establish advisory committees as necessary under the Parks Victoria Act)
- enabling the Minister to gazette certain works or classes of permanent works in parks which do not require ministerial approval
- updating the references to the former Warby Range State Park (now part of Warby-Ovens National Park) as a park where the searching for gemstones may be permitted
- repealing several redundant provisions.

Marine and Coastal Act 2018

This Act, which strengthens marine and coastal management in Victoria, amended the National Parks Act on 1 August 2018 so that, when preparing a park management plan, there must be regard to the requirements for preparing a coastal and marine management plan under the Marine and Coastal Act.

Further to last year's annual report, the *Planning and Environment Amendment (Distinctive Areas and Landscapes) Act 2018* amended the National Parks Act on 30 May 2018 in relation to various obligations relating to distinctive areas and landscapes.

Amendments to the regulations

On 12 September 2018 the National Parks Amendment Regulations 2018 amended the Regulations to reflect amendments made to the Act by the Parks Victoria Act and also to allow a person holding a Wrasse (Ocean) Fishery Access Licence under the Fisheries Regulations 2009 to transit Cape Howe Marine National Park. They also repealed the travelling allowances applying to members of the National Parks Advisory Council and advisory committees.

Authorities under the Act

Leases, licences and other authorities

In relation to leases and licences granted under the Act during the year:

- Dandenong Ranges National Park – A one-year lease was granted under section 19B of the Act for the operation of the kiosk and tearooms at Grants Picnic Area.
- Mornington Peninsula National Park – A two-year lease was granted under section 32B of the Act to Surf Life Saving Victoria for Gunnamatta Surf Life Saving Club for the purposes of surf life-saving activities.
- Haining Farm – A 7-month licence was granted under section 26A of the Act over parts of the park for the grazing of stock and residential occupation of a farm dwelling.

Other authorities granted under the Act or the Regulations included:

- permits issued under section 21(1AA)
 - 101 permits for commercial filming and photography
 - 2 permits for Point Nepean National Park (one to the Sorrento Croquet Club Inc. for club game days and tournaments, and the other to Ventura Bus Lines to provide a shuttle service within the park)

- 1 permit for Cape Conran Coastal Park (for the operation of a mobile food and beverage van)

- 345 new or renewed tour operator licences issued under section 27D (see *Enhancing Visitor Enjoyment and Tourism*)
- 7 authorisations under section 45A(4) in relation to particular commercial fishing vessels transiting Cape Howe Marine National Park
- 233 event permits issued under regulation 69 of the National Park Regulations 2013.

Licences for bee sites in parks are now granted under the *Land Act 1958*.

Consents to public authorities

Table 2 lists the consents granted under section 27 of the Act to public authorities (as defined in the Act) to carry out works, subject to conditions, in various parks.

Consents to earth resource activities

The Minister's consent given under section 40 of the Act to enable Beach Energy Limited to explore for natural gas in the Port Campbell National Park was tabled in both houses of Parliament on 4 June 2019.

Table 2: Consents to public authorities

Park	Public authority	Purpose
Great Otway National Park (NP)	Telstra Corporation Limited	Install, operate and maintain a telecommunications facility at Kennett River as part of the Mobile Black Spot Program.
		Install, operate and maintain a telecommunications facility at Wye River as part of the Mobile Black Spot Program.
	VicRoads	Carry out rock armour works on the Great Ocean Road.
Heathcote-Graytown NP	Telstra Corporation Limited	Install, operate and maintain telecommunications infrastructure as part of the mobile and radio network.
Point Nepean NP	Telstra Corporation Limited	Upgrade a network site.
The Lakes NP	Telstra Corporation Limited	Telecommunications facility including the installation of new conduit and fibre optic cable and associated infrastructure.
Bunyip State Park	AusNet Electricity Services	Fire mitigation works.

Enforcement

There were five individuals successfully prosecuted during the year for committing offences under the Act (5) or the Regulations (6).² The most numerous offences related to carrying, possessing or using a gun or other weapon in a park.

There were 291 infringement notices issued during the year in relation to prescribed offences against the Act or the Regulations. These included offences relating to recreational fishing in a marine national park or marine sanctuary (69), dogs (58), camping outside an area set aside or an occupation site (35), use of a vehicle (34), illegal firewood collection (21) and lighting or maintaining a fire (21).

There were also 66 official warnings and 5 warnings issued in relation to offences under the Act or the Regulations. These related to offences including recreational fishing in a marine national park or marine sanctuary (38), driving in areas closed to the public (11) and dogs (8).

Interstate cooperation

Australian Alps cooperative management program

The *Memorandum of understanding in relation to the cooperative management of the Australian Alps national parks* (the MOU) covers – in Victoria – the Alpine, Baw Baw, Mount Buffalo and Snowy River national parks, the Avon Wilderness Park and the Lake Mountain unit of the Yarra Ranges National Park (which was added in July 2016).

The purpose of the MOU is to promote cross-border cooperation in the protection and management of this highly significant conservation area. The four agencies involved in the MOU are Parks Victoria, the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, the ACT Parks and Conservation Service and the Commonwealth Department of Environment and Energy.

Several workshops and forums were held during the year, including: a workshop to update the Australian Alps Program Strategic Plan for 2019–2022; the biennial Australian Alps Walking Track Stakeholder meeting; an Alpine Resorts Environmental Forum; the biennial operations workshop, which focussed on ways to achieve better environmental outcomes when building infrastructure in and around waterways; and the biennial heritage building skills workshop.

Other projects and initiatives aimed at benefiting mountain catchments and ecosystems across the Alps included:

- archiving the significant legacy of Dr Alec Costin, a pre-eminent alpine ecologist (Year 2 of 2)
- monitoring Sambar deer using GPS collars (Year 2 of 3)
- a large scale, cross-border aerial horse survey
- a hygiene and biosecurity project using community based social marketing to better align biosecurity messaging and infrastructure with community values (Year 1 of 2)
- an assessment using drones of multiple deer control techniques (Year 1 of 3) – trialling three methods of deer control at Lake Mountain and using drone modelling technology to assess their effectiveness.
- an assessment using drones of the impact of feral horses on streambanks and wetlands (Year 2 of 3)
- the production of an Australian Alps promotional video – a short video that explains what the Australian Alps Cooperative Program is, what it has achieved and why it remains a vital conduit between the partner agencies.

Advisory bodies

National Parks Advisory Council

The National Parks Advisory Council is appointed under section 10 of the Act. Its main functions are to advise the Minister generally in relation to the administration of the Act and on particular matters in relation to which its advice is required under the Act or is sought by the Minister.

The council comprises eight non-government members. As at 30 June 2019 the members were:

Convenor: Mr Doug Humann AM
Members: Associate Professor Ursula De Jong
Ms Judith Dixon
Mr Michael Fendley
Ms Anna Foley
Mr Adam McLean
Dr Mary-Jane Rogers
Mr Chris Rose.

The council's annual report for 2018–19 provides information on the council and its activities during the year.

Several non-statutory advisory groups also provided advice on the management of various parks.

² The numbers refer to prosecutions during the year for which successful results were obtained regardless of when the offences took place.

Appendix 1

Areas managed under the National Parks Act

The only change during the year to the areas managed under the Act was to Greater Bendigo National Park (see footnote to Table A below).

A National parks (Schedule Two)

National park	Area (ha) 30 June 2019
1 Alfred	3 050
2 Alpine	661 777
3 Barmah	28 505
4 Baw Baw	13 530
5 Brisbane Ranges	8 885
6 Budj Bim	8 565
7 Burrowa-Pine Mountain	18 400
8 Chiltern-Mt Pilot	21 650
9 Churchill	271
10 Cobboboonee	18 510
11 Coopracambra	38 800
12 Croajingolong	*88 525
13 Dandenong Ranges	3 535
14 Errinundra	39 870
15 French Island	*11 160
16 Grampians	168 235
17 Greater Bendigo**	^17 561
18 Great Otway	*110 332
19 Gunbower	9 330
20 Hattah-Kulkyne	49 975
21 Heathcote-Graytown	12 700
22 Kara Kara	13 990
23 Kinglake	23 210
24 Lake Eildon	27 750
25 Lind	1 370

National park	Area (ha) 30 June 2019
26 Little Desert	132 647
27 Lower Glenelg	26 430
28 Lower Goulburn	9 320
29 Mitchell River	14 395
30 Mornington Peninsula	*2 680
31 Morwell	565
32 Mount Buffalo	31 020
33 Mount Richmond	1 733
34 Murray-Sunset	665 400
35 Organ Pipes	153
36 Point Nepean	*578
37 Port Campbell	*1 830
38 Snowy River	114 600
39 Tarra-Bulga	2 015
40 Terrick Terrick	6 390
41 The Lakes	2 390
42 Warby-Ovens	14 750
43 Wilsons Promontory	*49 049
44 Wyperfeld	359 445
45 Yarra Ranges	77 185
Total – National parks	2 912 061

* Area includes the area of the national park located beneath a marine national park.

** Parts of the Greater Bendigo NP extend only to 100 metres below the land surface.

^ An area of 245 hectares was added to the park and the area of the park was recalculated to exclude an area of freehold incorrectly shown as part of the park.

B Wilderness parks (Schedule Two A)

Wilderness park	Area (ha) 30 June 2019
1 Avon	39 650
2 Big Desert	142 300
3 Wabba	20 100
Total – Wilderness parks	202 050

C State parks (Schedule Two B)

State park	Area (ha) 30 June 2019
1 Arthurs Seat	565
2 Black Range	11 700
3 Broken-Boosey	1 010
4 Bunyip	16 655
5 Cape Nelson	210
6 Cathedral Range	3 616
7 Dergholm	10 400
8 Enfield	4 400
9 Holey Plains	10 740
10 Kooyoora	11 350
11 Lake Tyers	8 680
12 Langi Ghiran	3 040
13 Leaghur	2 050
14 Lerdererg	20 185
15 Moondarra	6 330
16 Mount Arapiles-Tooan	7 470
17 Mount Buangor	2 400
18 Mount Granya	6 140
19 Mount Lawson	13 150
20 Mount Napier	2 800
21 Mount Samaria	7 600
22 Mount Worth	1 040
23 Paddys Ranges	2 010
24 Reef Hills	2 020
25 Warrandyte	689
26 Werribee Gorge	575
Total – State parks	156 825

D Other parks (Schedule Three)

Other park	Area (ha) 30 June 2019
1 Bay of Islands CP	950
2 Beechworth HP	1 090
3 Cape Conran CP	11 700
4 Cape Liptrap CP	4 320
5 Discovery Bay CP	*10 460
6 Gadsen Bend Park	1 620
7 Gippsland Lakes CP	17 688
8 Haining Farm	66
9 Kings Billabong Park	2 195
10 Lake Albacutya Park	8 300
11 Langwarrin FFR	214
12 Lysterfield Park	1 397
13 Murray-Kulkyne Park	4 555
14 Nyah-Vinifera Park	1 370
15 Steiglitz HP	430
16 Tara Range Park	7 620
17 Tyers Park	1 810
18 Woodlands HP	820
Total – Other parks	76 605

CP Coastal Park

FFR Flora and Fauna Reserve

HP Historic Park

* Area includes the area of the park located beneath a marine national park.

E Other parks and reserves (Schedule Four)

Other park or reserve	Area (ha) 30 June 2019
1 Bunurong MP	*1 660
2 Castlemaine Diggings NHP**	7 590
3 Corner Inlet MCP	*18 000
4 Deep Lead NCR (No. 1)**	1 120
5 Nooramunga MCP	15 000
6 Shallow Inlet MCP	2 000
7 Wilsons Promontory MP	*10 000
8 Wilsons Promontory MR	
Total – Other parks and reserves	55 370

MCP Marine and Coastal Park

NCR Nature Conservation Reserve

MP Marine Park

NHP National Heritage Park

MR Marine Reserve

* Area includes the area of the park or reserve located beneath a marine national park.

** Castlemaine Diggings NHP and Deep Lead NCR (No. 1) extend only to 100 metres below the land surface.

F Wilderness zones (Schedule Five)

Wilderness zones are located within several national parks, as set out below. The areas of the wilderness zones are included in the areas of the relevant parks in Part A of this appendix.

	National park	Wilderness zone	Area (ha) 30 June 2019
1	Alpine	Mount Darling-Snowy Bluff	40 400
2	Alpine	Razor-Viking	15 700
3	Alpine	Indi	13 800
4	Alpine	Cobberas	10 000
5	Alpine	Buchan Headwaters	30 000
6	Alpine	Tingaringy	7 900
7	Coopracambra	Genoa	19 400
8	Croajingolong	Sandpatch	15 600
9	Croajingolong	Cape Howe	7 100
10	Murray-Sunset	Sunset	126 900
11	Murray-Sunset	Minook	38 700
12	Murray-Sunset	Galpunga	35 700
13	Murray-Sunset	Mount Cowra	23 500
14	Snowy River	Snowy River	27 000
15	Snowy River	Bowen	17 500
16	Wilson's Promontory	Wilson's Promontory	21 800
17	Wyperfeld	North Wyperfeld	97 900
18	Wyperfeld	South Wyperfeld	61 300
19	Wyperfeld	Chinaman Flat	29 800
Total – Wilderness zones			640 000

G Remote and natural areas (Schedule Six)

Remote and natural areas are located within several national parks, as set out below. The areas of the remote and natural areas are included in the areas of the relevant parks in Part A of this appendix.

National park		Remote and natural area	Area (ha) 30 June 2019
1	Alpine	The Governors	8 100
2	Alpine	Macalister	33 300
3	Alpine	Dandongadale	3 700
4	Alpine	Bundara-Cobungra	13 700
5	Alpine	Bogong	16 300
6	Alpine	Davies Plain	10 500
7	Alpine	Suggan Buggan	17 800
8	Alpine	Upper Snowy	11 800
9	Baw Baw	Baw Baw Plateau	6 500
10	Burrowa-Pine Mountain	Mount Burrowa	6 200
11	Coopracambra	Mount Kaye	8 100
12	Croajingolong	Rame Head	9 800
13	Errinundra	Brodribb	7 700
14	Grampians	Victoria Range	14 000
15	Grampians	Serra Range	11 200
16	Grampians	Major Mitchell Plateau	6 900
17	Little Desert	Little Desert	16 400
18	Mount Buffalo	North Buffalo	6 500
19	Murray-Sunset	South Sunset	24 000
20	Wilson's Promontory	Wilson's Promontory Islands (12)	469
21	Wilson's Promontory	Southern Wilson's Promontory	14 400
22	Wyperfeld	Hopping Mouse Hill	32 100
Total – Remote and natural areas			279 469

H Marine national parks (Schedule Seven)

Marine national park*	Area (ha) 30 June 2019
1 Bunurong	2 100
2 Cape Howe	4 050
3 Churchill Island	670
4 Corner Inlet	1 550
5 Discovery Bay	2 770
6 French Island	2 800
7 Ninety Mile Beach	2 750
8 Point Addis	4 600
9 Point Hicks	4 000
10 Port Phillip Heads	3 580
11 Twelve Apostles	7 500
12 Wilsons Promontory	15 550
13 Yaringa	980
Total – Marine national parks	52 900

I Marine sanctuaries (Schedule Eight)

Marine sanctuary	Area (ha) 30 June 2019
1 Barwon Bluff	17
2 Beware Reef	220
3 Eagle Rock	17
4 Jawbone	30
5 Marengo Reefs	12
6 Merri	25
7 Mushroom Reef	80
8 Point Cooke	290
9 Point Danger	25
10 Ricketts Point	115
11 The Arches	45
Total – Marine sanctuaries	876

* Marine national parks extend only to 200 metres below the land surface. Some partly overlay parts of other parks under the Act.

J Other areas (non-scheduled)*

Area	Section of Act	Area (ha) 30 June 2019
1 Bald Hills BR	19B	1
2 Collins Settlement Historic Site	19B	1
3 Flinders NCR	19B	1
4 Flinders Natural Interest Reserve	19B	4
5 Long Forest NCR	19B	283
6 Lower Glenelg PPR and SLR	19B	24
7 Main Ridge NCR	19B	64
8 Moreep BR	19B	10
9 Nyerimilang Park	19B	200
10 Wychitella NCR	19B	3 780
11 Mt St Gwinear access road	19C	35
12 Commonwealth land adjacent to Woodlands Historic Park	19D	31
13 Picnic area at McKenzie's Flat (Lerderderg State Park)	19E	0.1
14 Blackwood Ranges Track (Lerderderg State Park)	19E	0.1
15 Glenample Homestead	32AA	8
Total – Other areas		4 442

BR Bushland Reserve

NCR Nature Conservation Reserve

PPR Public Purposes Reserve

SLR Scenic Lookout Reserve

* Only specific sections of the Act apply to these areas.

K Summary – Areas managed under the Act

Category	No. of areas 30 June 2019	Area (ha) 30 June 2019
A National parks (Schedule Two)	45	2 912 061
B Wilderness parks (Schedule Two A)	3	202 050
C State parks (Schedule Two B)	26	156 825
D Other parks (Schedule Three)	18	76 605
E Other parks and reserves (Schedule Four)	8	55 370
H Marine national parks (Schedule Seven)	13	52 900
I Marine sanctuaries (Schedule Eight)	11	876
J Other areas (non-scheduled)	15	4 442
Total	139	3 461 129

L Unproclaimed additions

As at 30 June 2019 the following legislation provides for future additions to the parks system.

Act	Provision of Act	Park	Area (ha)
1 <i>National Parks Act 1975</i>	50K	Greater Bendigo National Park	*16
2 <i>National Parks Act 1975</i>	79	Great Otway National Park	*88
3 <i>National Parks Act 1975</i>	Schedule One AA clause 20	Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park	*2
4 <i>National Parks (Amendment) Act 1989</i>	29(3)	Moondarra State Park	178
Total – Unproclaimed additions			284

* Area will become part of the park on surrender of the title or lease to the Crown.

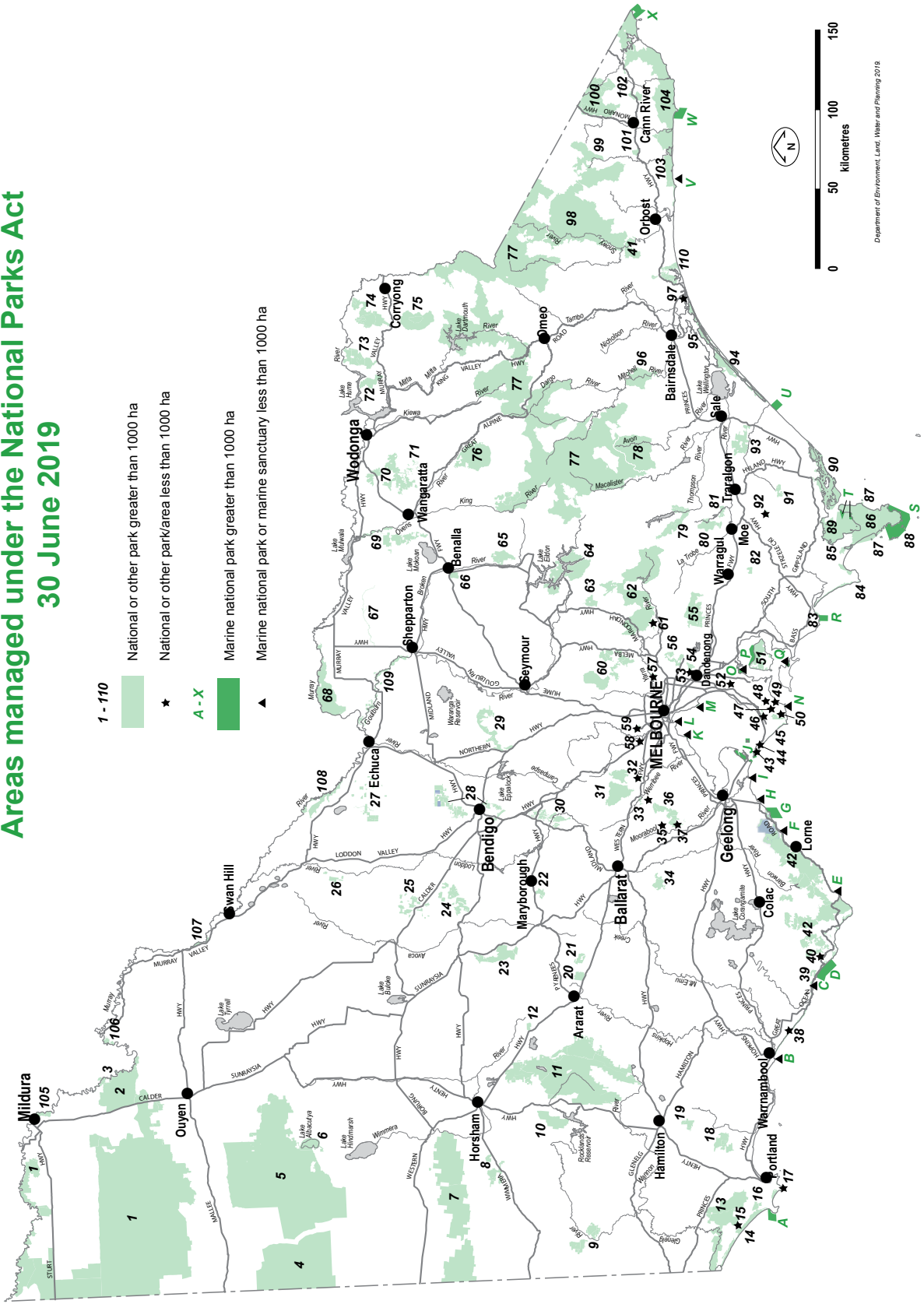
Appendix 2

Location of parks and other areas

National and other parks and areas	Map ref				
Alfred NP	102	Hattah-Kulkyne NP	2	Shallow Inlet MCP	85
Alpine NP	77	Heathcote-Graytown NP	29	Snowy River NP	98
Arthurs Seat SP	46	Holey Plains SP	93	Steiglitz HP	37
Avon WP	78	Kara Kara NP	23	Tara Range Park	41
Bald Hills BR	48	Kinglake NP	60	Tarra-Bulga NP	91
Barmah NP	68	Kings Billabong Park	105	Terrick Terrick NP	27
Baw Baw NP and Mt St Gwinear access road	79	Kooyoora SP	24	The Lakes NP	95
Bay of Islands CP	38	Lake Albacutya Park	6	Tyers Park	81
Beechworth HP	71	Lake Eildon NP	64	Wabba WP	75
Big Desert WP	4	Lake Tyers SP	110	Warby-Ovens NP	69
Black Range SP	10	Langi Ghiran SP	20	Warrandyte SP	57
Brisbane Ranges NP	36	Langwarrin FFR	52	Werribee Gorge SP	33
Broken-Boosey SP	67	Leaghur SP	26	Wilson's Promontory MP	87
Budj Bim NP	18	Lerderderg SP		Wilson's Promontory MR	88
Bunurong MP	83	and associated leased areas	31	Wilson's Promontory NP	86
Bunyip SP	55	Lind NP	101	Woodlands HP and adjacent Commonwealth land	59
Burrowa-Pine Mountain NP	74	Little Desert NP	7	Wychitella NCR	25
Cape Conran CP	103	Long Forest NCR	32	Wyperfeld NP	5
Cape Liptrap CP	84	Lower Glenelg NP		Yarra Ranges NP	62
Cape Nelson SP	17	and Cobboboonee NP	13		
Castlemaine Diggings NHP	30	Lower Glenelg PPR and SLR	15		
Cathedral Range SP	63	Lower Goulburn NP	109	Marine national parks and marine sanctuaries	Map ref
Chiltern-Mt Pilot NP	70	Lysterfield Park	54	Barwon Bluff MS	I
Churchill NP	53	Main Ridge NCR	47	Beware Reef MS	V
Collins Settlement HS	44	Mitchell River NP	96	Bunurong MNP	R
Coopracambra NP	100	Moondarra SP	80	Cape Howe MNP	X
Corner Inlet MCP	89	Moreep BR	35	Churchill Island MNP	Q
Croajingolong NP	104	Mornington Peninsula NP	45	Corner Inlet MNP	T
Dandenong Ranges NP	56	Morwell NP	92	Discovery Bay MNP	A
Deep Lead NCR (No. 1)	12	Mount Arapiles-Tooan SP	8	Eagle Rock MS	F
Dergholm SP	9	Mount Buangor SP	21	French Island MNP	P
Discovery Bay CP	14	Mount Buffalo NP	76	Jawbone MS	L
Enfield SP	34	Mount Granya SP	72	Marengo Reefs MS	E
Errinundra NP	99	Mount Lawson SP	73	Merri MS	B
Flinders NCR	49	Mount Napier SP	19	Mushroom Reef MS	N
Flinders NIR	50	Mount Richmond NP	16	Ninety Mile Beach MNP	U
French Island NP	51	Mount Samaria SP	65	Point Addis MNP	G
Gadsen Bend Park	106	Mount Worth SP	82	Point Cooke MS	K
Gippsland Lakes CP	94	Murray-Kulkyne Park	3	Point Danger MS	H
Glenample Homestead	40	Murray-Sunset NP	1	Point Hicks MNP	W
Grampians NP	11	Nooramunga MCP	90	Port Phillip Heads MNP	J
Great Otway NP	42	Nyah-Vinifera Park	107	Ricketts Point MS	M
Greater Bendigo NP	28	Nyerimilang Park	97	The Arches MS	C
Gunbower NP	108	Organ Pipes NP	58	Twelve Apostles MNP	D
Haining Farm	61	Paddys Ranges SP	22	Wilson's Promontory MNP	S
		Point Nepean NP	43	Yaringa MNP	O
		Port Campbell NP	39		
		Reef Hills SP	66		

BR	Bushland Reserve	MNP	Marine National Park	NIR	Natural Interest Reserve
CP	Coastal Park	MP	Marine Park	NP	National Park
FFR	Flora and Fauna Reserve	MR	Marine Reserve	PPR	Public Purposes Reserve
HP	Historic Park	MS	Marine Sanctuary	SLR	Scenic Lookout Reserve
HS	Historic Site	NCR	Nature Conservation Reserve	SP	State Park
MCP	Marine and Coastal Park	NHP	National Heritage Park	WP	Wilderness Park

Areas managed under the National Parks Act 30 June 2019



Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning 2019

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