

Manager, Park Planning,
Parks Victoria,
Level 10, 535 Bourke Street
Melbourne,
VIC 3000

15th March 2018

Submission on Belfast Coastal Reserve Draft Coastal Management Plan January 2018

To the Manager, Park Planning,

The Belfast Coastal Reserve Draft Coastal Management Plan (CMP) is a well-prepared detailed document and I appreciate the opportunity to provide comment on it.

I am highly supportive of the proposed Conservation Zone, with a focus on protecting the habitat values and minimising disturbance to breeding birds and roosting and foraging migratory shorebirds.

However, the proposal to continue racehorse training within the Reserve is unacceptable. Use of the Reserve for commercial racehorse training is incompatible with the stated aims of the CMP, which is to protect and enhance the outstanding cultural and natural values of the Reserve. Furthermore, any commercialisation of land that is reserved for conservation, recreation and public purposes is completely unacceptable. The draft CMP must be amended to prohibit commercial racehorse training.

The Reserve is a precious and fragile coastal landscape that has significance for all Victorians, and beyond. The draft CMP does a good job of outlining the values of the Reserve and it's unnecessary to recite those attributes here. However, I wish to highlight the following points:

- The Reserve is critical habitat for endangered species and has a rich array of environmental values which must be protected as a priority.
- The Reserve is valuable for its undeveloped, wild character. These are qualities that are increasingly rare in a rapidly urbanised world. While it might be easy to underestimate these qualities in the here and now, it's important for coastal planning to take a long-term, broad perspective and recognise the true value of this undeveloped, wild coastal landscape.
- The Reserve is highly valuable for the rich cultural heritage of the Gunditjmara and Eastern Maar Peoples. The protection of Indigenous cultural values is integral to the sound environmental management of the Reserve.
- The Reserve provides a natural buffer against the impacts of climate change, such as storm surges, erosion and sea level rise. The resilience of this coastal strip must be strengthened to ensure that the Reserve can continue to fulfil its function as a buffer. Stressors on the environment need to be reduced not increased.

Under the hierarchy of principles set out in the *Victorian Coastal Strategy 2014*, the first priority of coastal management is "to ensure the protection of significant environmental and cultural values" (p29 VCS 2014). The third item in this hierarchy of principles refers to use of the coast and states that "natural coastal resources are a limited and valuable public resource, and if developed or used, this should be done wisely and deliver proven net community and public benefit for current and future generations".

I do not support commercial horse training in the reserve. Horse training poses unacceptable risks to threatened species, habitat, cultural heritage sites, and public safety. Horse training is an activity that is highly exclusive and effectively bars the general public from using the area for passive recreation. This type of alienation of public land cannot be tolerated by the community. I personally do not visit the Belfast Coastal Reserve for recreation very frequently, however this stretch of coast is of value to me because it is part of the National Reserve System that exists to protect biodiversity, ecosystem services, cultural heritage and open undeveloped public space for current and future generations – these things are critically important and must not be allowed to be degraded or undermined.

Training of racehorses is not dependent on the coastal environment. It is inconsistent with the principles of the Victorian Coastal Strategy to allow such use in the Reserve. If the CMP was to allow commercial racehorse training, this will set a disastrous precedent for the whole of the Victorian coast, undermining the standards and principles of coastal management.

Introducing a complex system of permitted usage with different zones and time periods would require expensive reinforcement by way of education and enforcement. It's well known that environmental education and enforcement are beyond the budgets of State Government these days and it is ludicrous to be proposing such a system of permits when there is no capability or intention to back up the regulations with the necessary elements of education and enforcement.

The Reserve has particular significance as bird habitat. The Reserve is critical habitat for the Eastern Hooded Plover. When BirdLife Australia reviewed the breeding success of Hooded Plovers in the Reserve, they found 44% of sites had not produced fledglings in five breeding seasons of monitoring. Their findings show that sites were under extreme pressure from horses, off-leash dogs, illegal vehicles, as well as weeds and foxes.

The narrow, rocky beaches are subject to high pressure from horses and dogs which are squeezed into this narrow zone. This area happens to contain one of the densest populations of Hooded Plovers known – for example, there are 28 Hooded Plover breeding sites within the proposed Conservation Zone, which comprises 43% of the onshore Reserve, not to mention 24 Red-capped Plover and two Pied Oystercatcher breeding sites, plus one of five priority locations for Orange-bellied Parrots, plus internationally significant habitat for Sanderling and Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, and nationally significant habitat for Ruddy Turnstones and Double-banded Plovers.

The proposed Conservation Zone should be free of dogs and horses to alleviate pressures on these birds. Another 57% of the reserve would still be available for dogs (a designated off-leash beach plus bird areas as on-leash) and recreational horse-riding (with a permit system following strict conditions). It is critically important that adequate resources are allocated for education, community engagement and enforcement to ensure that people understand and respect the natural and cultural values of the area.

Yours Sincerely,

Submission template for Draft Belfast Coastal Reserve Management Plan

About you:

Your name:

Your Organisation (if relevant): _____

Postcode:

_____3280_____

Email or Postal address:

THIS SUBMISSION IS: **CONFIDENTIAL** **NOT CONFIDENTIAL** Date:
_13/3/18_____

Your Comments:

Please Note – The following information will be made publically available.

Main reason for interest: *(such as local resident, visitor to parks, tourism operator, environmental interest, business operator, education interest, scientific interest)*

Local resident and frequent user of and visitor to the Belfast reserve area

How often do you or your organisation use the reserve?

Daily Weekly Monthly A couple of times a year Rarely Never

How do you or your organisation mainly use the reserve?

Walking or running Dog walking Using the beach (swimming and surfing)
 Horse riding Horse training Volunteering
 Camping Hunting Fishing/boating
 Picnicking Birdwatching Socialising
 Other (please specify): _____

Which part(s) of the reserve do you or your organisation most frequently use?

West of Killarney (Port Fairy side) Between Killarney and Big Baldy
 East of Big Baldy (Warrnambool side) Not sure



Dear Parks Victoria,

Please take into consideration when finalising the plan for Belfast Coastal Reserve our Riding School,

We have been in operation for more than 20 years having opened in September 1997, we are an important part of Warrnambool's tourism and are very much loved by the local community.

Not allowing access west of Big Baldy would greatly effect the way we operate, our profits and also increase risk by having to ride further east towards more populated beaches.

There is no evidence after 20 years of us in operation that we have had any negative impact whatsoever on either flora or fauna.

The Hooded Plover populations are increasing, the vegetation is growing and closing in on us. We have seen the vegetation growing and closing in bald patches on the sand dunes, instead of us causing vegetation not to grow just the opposite is happening. Hence the name that we came up with Big Baldy, it once had no vegetation on it. We have always done the right thing and have kept to tracks, we have not made our own we have used pre existing tracks.

If we have to stay east of Big Baldy it then pushes us closer to the populated beach access areas, this increases risk to our riders and to the public. Mixing public with hoses creates a risk to beach goers by having horses in areas where they are walking. The public in turn create a risk to us, they may have dogs off lead that could frighten horses and cause falls, they may have loose items that blow around on the beach in the wind and could also frighten horses.

I'm trying to keep this short and to the point so please realise there are so many factors concerning risk management between horses and the public. We would still run rides this way if we had to but it is definitely not something we want to do, especially as far as we see and are concerned there we no changes on our behalf that needed to be made.

Not allowing access west of Big Baldy would mean we aren't able to do our half day rides with morning or afternoon tea, we simply don't have enough space to ride going east, we would be backtracking and it would not be enjoyable for regular riders and more experienced riders who want a bigger, longer ride and who also want to ride somewhere new. This is devastating to think we may loose this part of our business.

I would make the argument that historical trainers are able to access the dark green zone, surely we are considered historical riders also? After 20 years of conducting rides for tourists and Warrnambool locals we need to be able to continue what we are doing. We have a permit we pay our fees we have no complaints against us, we have not been cautioned about

doing something we shouldn't. There is no reason we shouldn't be able to continue as we have been.

I'm open to some sort of compromise or negotiation that still allows access west of Big Baldy.

Just some rough statistics about us,

We're so lucky to have what we do and are able to share this with the rest of the world, please don't make it harder for us and less enjoyable!

Thank you for reading this,

Kind Regards

Rundell's Mahogany Trail Rides

I am a Belfast Coastal Reserve and foreshore user.

who like to use the PUBLIC foreshore reserve.

I DO NOT support commercial training of racehorses anywhere within the public foreshore reserve.

The Belfast Coastal Reserve is an important PUBLIC asset for the local and visiting community and an important component of the region's tourism industry. It boasts a unique environment with a barrier reef which provides sheltered bays for a variety of recreational pursuits including walking, fishing, diving, swimming, boating, surfing and a diverse range of habitat for flora and fauna, some of which are endangered.

I'm sure you already know this which is why I am dumbfounded that you actually think it's alright to allow commercial horse training in a PUBLIC coastal reserve.

There are so many reasons why commercial horse training is inappropriate along the foreshore and apart from the environmental destruction and its effects on local flora and fauna this activity also represents access issues and also serious public health and safety issues for recreational users.

I am sick of the stench of urine and horse manure in the public car park.

You cannot recreationally fish of a beach with racehorses galloping on it.

You cannot safely walk on a beach with racehorses galloping on it and the car park isn't any safer with large numbers of horses in it.

You cannot safely walk your dogs on a beach with racehorses training on it.

I have also had difficulty getting car parks and because of horse traffic and a lack of parking due to oversized trucks utilising the car park.

The interim licensing of racehorses to use Golfies at East Beach at Port Fairy has degraded the beach environment. There have been many arguments between trainers and the public in the car park, threats and vandalism. there anymore until commercial activities are banned. Does this sound like a well management public reserve for all Victorians?

It's actually really sad and so far it has been a terrible case of mismanagement. Do you support the public or the commercial racing industry?

I hope I'm not the first person to be kicked in the head or run down while walking in the beach.

I ask the Parks Victoria to consider the rights of the PUBLIC to access and safely enjoy this valuable recreational and environmental asset.

Racehorses belong on a purpose built race track, not on our public coastal reserves.

Regards,

**Submission in response to the
'Belfast Coastal Reserve – Draft Coastal Management Plan January 2018' ('the Plan').**

I have read in detail the Plan and set out below my submission by way of response.

There are four main aspects to my submission:

1. Dogs
2. Horses (Licensed Trainers)
3. Horses (Recreational Riders)
4. Four wheel drives and trail bikes

1. Dogs

Dogs should be permitted *off leash at all times* on Belfast Coastal Reserve below the high water mark. The only exception to this should be no dogs at Killarney Beach during summer months between 9am and 5pm. Dogs should be under effective voice control at all times.

The proposal to essentially ban dogs from the Reserve, with an extremely limited 'off leash' area is unnecessary and does nothing other than to anger locals and other dog owners who for years have exercised their dogs in this Reserve without incident.

The allegation that dogs 'present a *significant* risk to vulnerable wildlife and the experience and safety of other visitors, particularly when off-leash' (p vii of the draft Plan, my emphasis) is grossly over-stated. Dogs – whether in suburbia or being exercised in public - present a *small* and generally insignificant risk in society. To state that they present a 'significant' risk is false and misleading. The ability of dog owners to exercise their dogs off-leash in a coastal area does however provide significant *benefits*, to both humans and dogs, both in terms of physical and mental health.

The Key Threats Table on page 29 of the Report (Table 5.1) states that the risk by domestic dogs to resident shorebirds is 'Extreme'. I find this alarmist and without sufficient evidence. Parks Victoria's own data from 2014 show that dogs supposedly only contribute to 3.26% of failures of hatchings. This is not an 'Extreme' Risk, and is far behind tidal risks (24.91%), fox (6.91%) and even risk from persons (5.95%).

Whatever small risk dogs pose to birds in the Reserve is completely outweighed by other risks including foxes, tidal movements, birds of prey, and loss of habitat (including introduction of marram grass which has led to the alteration of their nesting habitat). I am also curious as to why dogs are still allowed off-leash at Point Ritchie beach in Warrnambool, which is also a nesting area for Hooded Plovers. I do know that if Warrnambool City Council tried to ban dogs from this area, that the public back-lash would be severe.

The draft Plan also states that 'it is also important to ensure that beach areas of very high visitor use are free from dogs to avoid negative interactions' (page 49). I am perplexed therefore as to why Killarney Beach, arguably the most-visited site on all the Reserve, has been selected to be the 'dog area'. Of all the areas in the Reserve, this is the area of 'high visitor use'. The *rest* of the Reserve has *low* visitor use: on any given day you would be lucky to see one two or other walkers or fishers.

There is very little public open space in either Warrnambool, Koroit or Port Fairy. The suggestion made in the report that dogs could be exercised at Southcombe Park (Port Fairy) or Harris Street (Warrnambool) instead of the beach is woefully inadequate.

2. Horses – Licensed Trainers

Licensed thoroughbred trainers should be allowed to continue to use the Belfast Coastal Reserve below the high water mark and existing bridal access tracks. This should be limited to two horses, per trainer, per day, regardless of the number of horses in work for any one trainer. No riding at Killarney Beach during summer months between 9am and 5pm.

Historically, the Reserve has been only lightly used by local (generally small scale) trainers to train thoroughbreds. All this changed at the time of the arrival of DK Weir, and his enormous team of horses. There was absolutely no issue in thoroughbreds using the Reserve to train up until this time. The activity was low volume, low impact, and trainers were respectful of the environment.

Limit trainers to two horses, per day, and to the areas below the high water mark and to existing bridal access tracks. This would restore thoroughbred training to the small scale, low impact activity that it had been for decades. Restricting thoroughbred training to below the high water mark (ie at the water's edge) would also eliminate the risk of horses disturbing Hooded Plover nests.

3. Horses – Recreational Riders

Recreational riders to be allowed access to the Belfast Coastal Reserve to ride below the high water mark and to existing bridal access tracks. No riding at Killarney Beach during summer months between 9am and 5pm.

Recreational riders should continue to be able to use the Reserve at all times. Riding should be restricted to below the high water mark (ie at water's edge, and no dune riding) and to existing bridal access tracks. The exception to this would be to prohibit riding at Killarney Beach over summer months between 9am and 5pm.

Recreational riders use the reserve only sparingly. But for those who do, it is an important and low impact activity. Recreational riders pose virtually no risk to other beach users or wildlife.

4. Trail Bikes and Four Wheel Drives

The ban on these vehicles should remain. Enforcement should be stepped up. I have witnessed trail bikes speeding through dunes near Levy's Point as well as dunes at The Cutting and Gorman's Lane. They are not only destructive to the environment, but dangerous for all other users. It should be a priority of management to remove these vehicles completely from the Reserve.

Conclusion

If a ban on recreational and licensed horse riding, and off-leash dog walking, is introduced, then I have no doubt that a large proportion of locals will simply ignore the ban, and risk the fines. Generally, members of the public are happy to comply with legislation where they can see there is a need for it. But in this case, the proposed ban is generally seen as having gone too far. I am genuinely concerned that what started as a problem with large teams of racehorses has now insidiously morphed into an attempt to shut out members of the public from their own backyard.

Passive users of the Reserve actually *assist* in its management by way of passive surveillance. A ban on a large proportion of recreational users will lead to a largely deserted coastal environment which is immediately *more* appealing to illegal users such as trail bike riders: there is no longer anyone there to monitor illegal activity.

It is also disappointing to see the statement in the Report that 'it is the competition between people, vehicles, dogs and horses that presents the most significant challenges' . This is fundamentally incorrect. There is no 'competition' between these users. There *is* a need to remove vehicles such as trailbikes and four wheel drives from the Reserve. But there is *no* competition between people, dogs and horses; I have been a recreational user of this Reserve and I have never, ever felt threatened or intimidated or 'in competition' with other passive users, be they people, dogs, or horses.

Banning dogs and horses from the Reserve will do nothing to save the Hooded Plover. There are so many other variables which places this bird at risk: foxes, tidal surges, birds of prey, feral cats, loss of habitat (including steep dunes caused by the introduction of marram grass). Banning dogs and horses seems to me to be an 'easy option' compared with longer term, more expensive, more labour intensive (and arguably more effective) management programs such as revegetation and fox baiting.

It is almost trite to have to state that locals (and the occasional visitor) visit Belfast Coastal Reserve because of its rugged beauty, and its relative isolation compared to Warrnambool and Port Fairy beaches (both of which impose some bans on dogs and horses). The mental and physical benefits of allowing members of the public to bring their dogs to this Reserve, or to exercise their horse, at any hour of the day, cannot be underestimated. If this Reserve is lost to the community as a place to exercise, to seek solace, to walk a dog, or ride a horse, then this Government has failed its community, profoundly and unforgiveably, by taking away one of the most precious resources of public open space that we have in South West Victoria.

Sincerely,

15 March 2018

14 March 2018

Manager Park Planning
Parks Victoria
Level 10
535 Bourke Street
Melbourne Vic 3001

Dear Sir

Re: **The Belfast Coastal Reserve**

Draft Management Plan Comments

Thanks for the opportunity to provide comment on this draft management plan.

I have been a regular visitor and user of the beaches within the Belfast Coastal Reserve. I mainly access the beach at Levys for fishing and walking. I have walked the entire distance from Thunder Point in Warrnambool to the Killarney car park several times. My comments and views have developed from my observations and experience over this period.

My comments for your consideration are as follows.

1. Environmental and Cultural Value of the Reserve

I consider the environmental and cultural value of the Belfast Coastal Reserve to be significant and hence I welcome that it is proposed that a management plan be established for the area.

The plan documents the significant value of the area. I would emphasize I strongly believe this coast needs to be protected for the preservation of -

- a. Endangered and vulnerable shorebirds
- b. The dune systems (including the middens and indigenous relics contained therein)
- c. The "wild beauty" of the coastline in order that it can be enjoyed by the community, both current and future, in harmony with the environment.

2. Establishing a Conservation Zone

The recommendation to establish a sizable conservation zone is welcomed. I believe this is long overdue. I concur with discussion in the report of the adverse impacts on endangered shorebirds, including the Hooded Plover, where unmanaged interaction with people, vehicles, horses and domestic dogs occurs.

3. Domestic Dogs

Clearly dog owners enjoy taking their pets to the coast and I note the plan addresses the need for this to occur in a controlled manner in the recreation zones. The problems in other municipalities with non-compliance of "On Leash" zones as discussed in the report is noted (eg Mornington Peninsula).

Sadly, it is my observation that compliance with "on leash" and dog exclusion zoning is very poor in Warrnambool and this region of the state. Many dog owners currently disregard existing laws and signage regardless of the location, time of day or proximity to other people and/or wildlife.

I am very concerned that such non-compliance with dog control laws would be rife within the Belfast Coastal reserve. Policing and enforcing the laws would be extremely difficult, indeed what resources if any would be available for this purpose during all daylight hours, both in the short and long term.

4. Commercial Horse Training

Limited recreational horse riding in a controlled manner would appear to be sustainable. I have witnessed small horse riding groups moving along the waters' edge with little apparent impact on other people. I would have thought this could be managed in the recreation zones with the proviso they were not to disturb shorebirds, create excessive erosion and endanger people.

However, **I am strongly against commercial horse training activities within the coastal reserve dune systems and on its beaches** for the following reasons –

- The nature of horse training activities will preclude other users from being on the beach when it is occurring.
- There is evidence of **increased** erosion of the dunes where horse training is presently occurring (it is accepted erosion is also currently resulting from other users). It would appear impractical to control or acceptably mitigate this impact. The proposal to allow horses to be trained in the dunes appears to be directly counter to sensible modern dune management strategies used in other all coastal areas.

(Imagine the opposition that would occur if the local 4wd club were to propose a section of the dunes be developed for a vehicle and motor bike obstacle course!)

- The appropriate place for race horse training should surely be the Warrnambool race course. Indeed, it is understood that a sand track and exercise pool have recently been installed there to facilitate training and rehabilitation exercise.
- The argument that a recent Melbourne Cup winner was trained on the "Warrnambool" beach is not a valid reason to turn over this sensitive section of coastline to commercial horse training. Referring to the report, The Size and Scope of the Victorian Racing Industry, (Prepared by IEP /Sept 2013), there were 9966 thoroughbred horses racing in Victoria. Clearly some 9500 of these horses, forming the overwhelming majority, appear to be successfully trained and raced without any beach access.
Is not the solution to provide equivalent "land based" facilities for horse training in Warrnambool as occurs elsewhere within the horse racing industry.
- Arguments are made that the ocean saltwater provides "healing" powers for injured race horses. An internet search reveals that there is a plethora of equine hydrotherapy and spa treatment systems commercially available in the Australian market. These also include the facility for hot, cold and salt water. It would appear that these systems render the necessity to take horses onto sensitive beaches for cold salt water treatments obsolete.
- **The report provided little specific detail about the proposal to allow training on the section of beach between Levys Beach and Hoon Hill.** It is hence not possible to make detailed objective comments on the proposal.
However, there has been recent media discussion inferring that few people use this section of beach (the inference being that this then makes it acceptable for race horse training). This is not true nor valid. It is rare to find clear sand without footprints on this beach section or be totally alone.
Furthermore, this specific section of beach is subjected to large swells and wave action and localized and or widespread erosion to the base of the dunes. As such pedestrian access is often compromised and only available at low tides with the need to time the passing of narrow spots between large waves. The soft sand, steep beach and large swells create the hazards. I would have thought that such beach conditions were totally unsuitable for safe horse training activities.

Thanks you for receiving my comments.

I will be happy to provide any clarification if required.

Sincerely,

and frequent user of the beaches

This is crucial to the lifestyle and wellbeing of all that use it to enjoy the many activities that are part of living by the coast, such as dog walking and swimming.

The impact of threat of dogs on the dune/beach as claimed by Parks Victoria, seems at odds with the Moyne Shire activity report of 2014-2016, when not one complaint was received regarding dogs on beach; I have not witness any wrong- doing regarding dogs on beaches in all the years I have live here.

If the proposal is passed, we would have to walk 3-5 km along an 80 km, single lane road, with traffic travelling in both directions; there is a grass strip either side of the road that is used by pedestrians, as well vehicles to veer onto to pass each other. This will pose a great safety risk, especially to the aged; children, and drivers alike.

The only alternative then would be to drive; this will create more congestion on the roads leading to the beach, and in the car parks; in turn creating more up-grades to roads, carparks, and paths. The list goes on. How will this preserve the 'scenic beauty', 'feeling of wild' and 'sense of remoteness' describe by Parks Victoria in the Draft Management Plan

We strongly object to the Towill Way access being closed off and think Parks Victoria should keep to the Status-Quo for these very reasons. And as was envisaged by the Planning Authority of 1999.

Yours Sincerely

Manager
Parks Planning
Parks Victoria
Level 10, 535 Bourke Street
Melbourne, Vic. 3000

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing this submission
in response to the recently released Belfast Coastal Reserve Management Plan.

I am pleased with majority of the proposed changes presented in the draft plan,
especially regarding a greater protection of indigenous cultural sites and
habitats of threatened bird species.

However, there is one element of the Plan that requires clarification about our
beach access path. In § 6.4 (page 59) of the Draft Plan a clarification is required if
the Towilla Way beach access path is, or is not, a 'secondary' path that will be
'rationalised'. After talking to Parks Victoria at an information
session outside Port Fairy IGA, we defined our access as a 'primary' path. This
reassurance was great, but could you please confirm this in the Plan.

It was disappointing to read on Page (v) of the Draft Plan, which states that the
'The Belfast Coastal Reserve protects a narrow section of land backed by flat
open farmland, creating a sense of remoteness from nearby Warrnambool and
Port Fairy'. This is inaccurate and incomplete and shows that consultation for
this Plan did not include residents. We would be grateful if you
could now take the time to listen to our above concern.

The Belfast Coastal Reserve Management
Plan should specifically enshrine the Towilla Way beach access path for
pedestrian access and ensure that it is maintained as a safe pedestrian passage to
the beach and that it meets fire and vermin prevention standards.

In addition to above, I have other suggestions that I would like to contribute to
the Plan. One of the main goals of this Plan is to protect the dunes and habitats of
birds and other species. If the Plan is serious about doing so, building a walkway
over the dunes at Towilla Way beach access will help this promote people using
this path rather than creating 'secondary' paths. On page 60 of the plan there is
reference to establishing a "viewing platform" at the Cutting. This is a brilliant

idea to prevent 'secondary' paths in the dunes, so why not have something similar at the Towilla Way access point?

Another more important way of improving the health of the sand dunes is by removing introduced Marram Grass, that hold the dunes together after the dunes were ravaged by cattle in the 19th century. Dunes naturally move and change shape and with the stabilizing effect of Marram Grass, the dunes are eroding and causing mini cliffs and destroying hooded plover nests. ⁱ Re-planting of native grasses in the dunes will help improve their health; such as hairy spinifex's and knobby club rush.

Promoting re-planting of native grasses in the dunes for Landcare groups or Parks Victoria could be an option. Another idea could be to include in the Plan to promote and even potential subsidies land owners to plant native plants such as beaded glasswort and karkalla which are feed for native birds including the orange-bellied parrot. By increasing these endangered species food source could only be beneficial to their population. Such a process would also make landowners feel a part of the Plan and have ownership to conservation in the area. When people have visual connectedness to wildlife, they are more inclined to help conserve and protect them, so by having them arrive on their properties, will promote this. We are keen to participate in such private land conservation attempts, but education and subsidies on the matter would greatly help.

In the Killarney area, there has been a significant increase in the rabbit population which is causing horrific damage to the land. I do not have evidence for this but I can only assume that this has resulted because of the pest management of the foxes, the predator of the rabbit. Removing foxes is important, but to look at the conservation management in such a narrow view causes the rabbit population to explode. If you take a system thinking approach, and look at the interactions within the biosphere, you need predators to manage the herbivores population. Becoming more mainstream is the concept of re-wilding. Re-wilding of native species to the area such as the eastern quoll, which prey on rabbits, could have unimaginable benefits to the area as seen with other re-wilding episodes around the worldⁱⁱ

The construction of an environmental management plan must balance a lot of users and factors when compiling to be a successful project. But to allow commercial horse trainers certain access rights is staggering. If this Plan is to truly be effective and if this plan truly cares about the protection of birds and the dunes, commercial horse training should not be permitted. If such tight restrictions are put on dog walkers and recreational horses, yet commercial horse training is permitted, it puts the credibility of the Plan in jeopardy. From the surface, this imbalance makes it seem that powerful vested interests of Racing Victoria have had undue influence in this the planning process. A training facility could be constructed that involved sand and water training inland away from the precious natural environment. Of course, this would be at an expense, but allowing commercial training on the beach whilst trying to protect it is laughable.

The area of Port fairy has a horrible history of environmental mismanagement from over-whaling, hunting quolls to extinction in the area, introduced species, habitat destruction and land clearing. There have been many community groups trying to improve the health of the area and this Plan has the potential to undo some of our previous wrongs.

I appreciate you taking the time to read this and hopefully taking some suggestions on board. Clarification of our beach access as a 'primary path' would be much appreciated.

I look forward to hearing back from you.

Kind regards,

ⁱ <https://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/sand-dunes-are-rich-with-animals-and-plants-and-a-vital-part-of-our-ecology-20151227-glvblz.html>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.yellowstonepark.com/things-to-do/wolf-reintroduction-changes-ecosystem>

I am writing this letter to voice my utter dismay at Parks Victoria proposal to close Towilla Way to pedestrian access and the banning of recreational horse riding and dog walking along Armstrong Bay.

We are all acutely aware of caring for our beach and giving the uttermost care to ride at the water's edge. What did we do to deserve this persecution of our rights?

Towilla Way is used by local residents only, there is no vehicle access as it is very narrow and will only accommodate people in single file.

We feel that if this proposal goes through we will be disadvantaged

Armstrong Bay is not a tourist beach, it does not have a high traffic flow, what is the point of this proposal? This beach is a South West Community beach that has been used for many decades by locals and folks from our farming communities to bring their families to on the weekend and on holidays. Everyone that uses this beach takes care of it and has the greatest respect for the flora and fauna.

We feel that Parks Victoria has another agenda here and has used the recent Racehorse banning of riding on this beach to further it. There is no real traffic on our beach. Parks Victoria gave us no notice of this intended proposal, we found out through a friend who overheard it in conversation. Why as local residents were we not formally informed of their intentions?

As with all our community we strongly disagree with this proposal.

Yours Faithfully

Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council

Our Ref: 17/17

Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council
Level 3, 3 Treasury Place
East Melbourne VIC 3002
Tel: 03 9651 2643
vahc@dpc.vic.gov.au

15 March 2018

Manager, Parks Planning
Parks Victoria
Level 10, 535 Bourke Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Dear Manager, Parks Planning

The Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council's submission on the Belfast Coastal Reserve Draft Coastal Management Plan

The Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council (Council) is a statutory body established under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* (the Act). It comprises of Traditional Owners with one of its key responsibilities to promote awareness of Aboriginal cultural heritage (Attachment 1). Therefore Council welcomes the opportunity to provide the following brief comment on Parks Victoria's, Belfast Coastal Reserve Draft Coastal Management Plan (Draft Plan).

Given the land between Port Fairy and Warrnambool in south west Victoria has outstanding Aboriginal cultural values, Council is pleased that the Draft Plan was directed by a Project Steering Committee made up of the Traditional Owners, the Gunditj Mirring and Eastern Maar peoples. So too, that Parks Victoria's 15 year vision includes Traditional Owners actively collaborating with government agencies and other stakeholders to protect cultural places and promote Aboriginal knowledge and traditions in the area.

We note reference to the fact that all proposed activities in the Reserve must comply with the Act. The Draft Plan refers to numerous locations along the coastline that contain Aboriginal Ancestral Remains. Given there is no Registered Aboriginal party (RAP) for the area, the Draft Plan would be improved by a comprehensive understanding of the statutory role of the Council to manage these Ancestral Remains and for persons and public entities to report any Ancestral Remains discovered on private or public land (Attachment 2).

If you have any questions about Council's submission, please contact the Office of the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council on 03 8392 5390 or via email vahc@dpc.vic.gov.au

Yours sincerely

Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council

Council acknowledges the traditional Aboriginal owners of country throughout Victoria and pays its respect to them, their culture and their Elders past, present and future

Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council

2017-01

What is the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council?

The Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council (Council) was created under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* (Act) to ensure the preservation and protection of Victoria's rich Aboriginal cultural heritage. With important decision making responsibilities and all its members being Traditional Owners, the Council is the only statutory body of its kind in Australia.

The Council's vision is of a community that understands and respects Aboriginal cultural heritage and the cultural responsibilities of Traditional Owners. The Council recognises Traditional Owners as the primary guardians, keepers and knowledge holders of their heritage.

The Council is made up of up to eleven Traditional Owners who are appointed by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs. Members of the Council must reside in Victoria and have demonstrated traditional or familial links to an area in Victoria. They are also required to have relevant knowledge or experience in the management of Aboriginal cultural heritage in Victoria because the Council's role is as a specialist body rather than a representative one.



(Council Members in March 2017. Clockwise from top left: Mick Harding, Nellie Flagg, Marie Havea, Jennifer Beer, Rodney Carter, Jill Gallagher, Geraldine Atkinson, Eleanor Bourke and Tim Chatfield. Not present: Jim Berg and Ronald Jones).

What does the Council do?

The Council plays an important role in the implementation of the Act. The Council's principal functions are outlined below.

1. Making decisions on Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) applications

Since its establishment in 2006, the Council has appointed ten RAPs which collectively cover more than 60 per cent of Victoria. RAPs are organisations that hold decision-making responsibilities for protecting Aboriginal cultural heritage in a specified geographical area.

From 1 August 2016, the Council has 270 days to make a decision on RAP applications. If the Council requires an applicant to provide additional information to assist in making the decision, the 270 day timeframe is put on hold until the Council gets the information requested. From 1 August 2016, the Council will also be able to include conditions on the registration of a RAP.

2. Monitoring RAPs

Since 1 August 2016, the Council is responsible for overseeing and supervising the operations of RAPs. The Council is currently designing its approach to this work in collaboration with RAPs and with organisations already involved in monitoring RAPs.

3. Protecting Ancestors' resting places and returning Ancestors to Country

From 1 August, the Council is the central coordinating body responsible for Ancestral Remains in Victoria. Over time, this new role will allow the Council to strengthen the protection of Aboriginal burial places and deliver better support for Traditional Owners returning Ancestors to Country. To help implement the new legislation, the Council's Secretariat now includes an Ancestral Remains Unit made up of three full-time staff.

4. Secret or sacred objects in Victoria

From 1 August 2016, there are new obligations in relation to Aboriginal objects that are secret or sacred. A person who has custody of an Aboriginal object that is a secret or sacred object but who is not the owner of that object must, as soon as practicable, take all reasonable steps to transfer the object into the custody of the Council. The Council is working with key stakeholders to develop some general guidance about secret or sacred objects and will work with Traditional Owners and the broader Victorian community to keep these objects safe and preserve them for future generations.

5. Managing the Victorian Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Fund

The first Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Fund ever created in Victoria was established on 1 August 2016. The Council will be responsible for managing this Fund as guided by the Act. Over time, the Council is hoping to build up the Fund and to use it for initiatives to protect Aboriginal cultural heritage and to promote understanding and awareness of this unique heritage, managed by Traditional Owners for all Victorians.

6. Measures to promote understanding and awareness

The Council's work includes promoting understanding and awareness of Aboriginal cultural heritage in Victoria. The Council achieves this through establishing partnerships and consulting with key stakeholders, making submissions to reviews of legislation, investigations and inquiries that impact on Aboriginal cultural heritage, participating in external committees and reference groups.

7. Providing Advice to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and the Secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet

The Council provides advice to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs (Minister), both voluntarily and on request, on the protection and management of Aboriginal cultural heritage in Victoria. The Council also advises the Secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet on establishing standards and fee guidelines for consultation fees payable to RAPs by sponsors when preparing Cultural Heritage Management Plans (CHMPs) and assessments, and exercising his/her powers in relation to Cultural Heritage Permits, CHMPs and agreements.

8. Reporting to the Minister

From 1 August 2016, the Council must report to the Minister annually and produce a *State of Victoria's Aboriginal Cultural Heritage* report every five years.

For more information about the Council, visit

<http://dpc.vic.gov.au/index.php/aboriginal-affairs/victorian-aboriginal-heritage-council>

Contact the Council

Post: 1 Treasury Place, East Melbourne VIC 3002

Email: vahc@dpc.vic.gov.au

Phone: 03 8392 5368

2017-09

Ancestral Remains
Changes to the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* relevant
to universities and public entities

Changes to the law

On 1 August 2016, a number of changes were made to the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* (the Act), including in relation to Ancestral Remains. This fact sheet aims to provide information for universities and public entities affected by these changes. All references to legislation in this fact sheet are references to the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*, as at 1 August 2016.

Aboriginal Ancestral Remains

Aboriginal Ancestral Remains are defined as the whole or part of the bodily Ancestral Remains of an Aboriginal person, being a person belonging to the Indigenous peoples of Australia.

Ownership of Aboriginal Ancestral Remains

Under the changes to the Act, section 12(1)(a) outlines the underlying principle that as far as practicable Aboriginal cultural heritage, and specifically Aboriginal Ancestral Remains, should be owned by and returned to Traditional Owners of the area from which they originate.

Obligation on public entities and universities who have Aboriginal Ancestral Remains

Section 14 of the Act requires that, as of 1 August 2016, public entities and universities have two years to notify the Council in writing of any Aboriginal Ancestral Remains that are in their possession using the prescribed report form. In line with section 14(3), after providing a report to Council the public entity or university must take all reasonable steps to transfer the Ancestral Remains to Council.

Reporting and Transferring Aboriginal Ancestral Remains to the Council

Council has developed the following steps that are required in order for a public entity or university to take reasonable steps to transfer Aboriginal Ancestral Remains to Council:

1. **Report to Council.** Any public entity or university must report any Aboriginal Ancestral Remains to the Council, in the prescribed form by 31 July 2018.
2. **Transfer of Ancestral Remains.** Following receipt of a written report, a staff member of the Council's Ancestral Remains Unit will be in touch to arrange for transfer of the Aboriginal Ancestral Remains.
3. **Transfer of Ancestral Remains at risk.** There may be situations where a person or entity is not satisfied that they can keep the relevant Aboriginal Ancestral Remains safely while preparing a report. In such instances, Council should be contacted as a matter of urgency.

If you would like to make a report or have any questions about Aboriginal Ancestral Remains, please contact
 Council, on Ancestral Remains Unit - Victorian Aboriginal Heritage
 @dpc.vic.gov.au.



Active volunteers caring for the coast and catchment

Parks Victoria

Submission regarding the draft Belfast Coastal Reserve (BCR) Management Plan

Warrnambool Coastcare Landcare Network is the largest landcare-type organisation in western Victoria. Through our biodiversity conservation and community awareness raising activities we involve many hundreds of volunteers annually. We also participate in opportunities to shape policy and plans, as we have done during the BCR consultations this past year. Our geographical area of interest is Warrnambool and district. This includes Belfast Coastal Reserve and we were very pleased that the Victorian Government decided that the Reserve needed proper planning and management.

That initial pleasure has turned to dismay and incredulity. The draft plan makes clear that the State Government prefers commercial racehorse training in a conservation reserve rather than wildlife conservation and quiet recreation.

1. The draft plan recognises that BCR is the most significant area for Hooded Plover breeding yet proposes to entrench the recently escalated level of commercial racehorse training in BCR. This is despite a sand fibre training track and pool being constructed at Warrnambool Racing Club. We believe the commercial racehorse industry should use dedicated facilities at Warrnambool Racing Club or on private property, not in a public reserve where it is inconsistent with wildlife conservation and passive recreational activities.
2. Regulated recreational horse riding in the reserve along the shoreline and on designated tracks is acceptable.
3. The plan entrenches racehorse training in up to 5km or 25% of BCR's beaches. This is far too much given over to commercial interests above other uses. We believe that if commercial racehorse training must be accommodated in BCR then it should be restricted to the beach known as Golfies as this has the lowest conservation value and is less used for other activities.
4. The Conservation Zone should be exactly that. We believe commercial racehorses and dogs should not be permitted here.
5. The plan acknowledges several times that racehorses cause damage and are an extreme risk to resident and migratory shore birds yet the plan only increases this risk by entrenching the activity and high numbers of racehorses in multiple locations. Ridiculously, the plan acknowledges that it will do nothing to lower the risk to shore birds.
6. There are numerous documented cases of commercial racehorse trainers not complying with permit conditions. We do not believe that Parks Victoria will be able to monitor trainers adequately and so compliance will be lax, further jeopardising wildlife, fragile dunes and passive recreation.



Active volunteers caring for the coast and catchment

7. Commercial racehorse trainers away from the coast have constructed training facilities that replicate beaches and dunes. This illustrates that commercial racehorse training in BCA is not actually required and that the industry can and should provide its own facilities.

8. We feel sorry for the DELWP and Parks Victoria staff running the community consultations leading up to the draft plan. We feel that they were genuine in their work and committed to achieving a good result. But it is clear from the inconsistencies in the draft and the skewing of use towards the commercial racehorse industry that the final draft has been interfered with at the political level. As community volunteers attempting to conserve and restore a very depleted environment and who give their valuable time to participate in consultations such as those for BCR, this is a powerful slap in the face. To see our natural heritage slowly disappear under the weight of the horse gambling industry and its political supporters is heartbreaking.

Yours sincerely,

15/3/2018

Belfast Coast Management Plan: - Individual Submission / Survey

Name:

Signature

Email Address:

Post Code :

Age Range : 40 to 50

Gender : Male

Is this submission to be treated as Confidential : No

How often do you use the Reserve : 5 times a week

How do you Get to the Reserve: .. Walk, Drive, Ride a Bike, Ride a Horse

Drive, Run, Walk

What do you mainly use the Reserve for: (For example: Bird watching, Swimming, surfing, kitesurfing, windsurfing, snorkelling, horse riding, dog walking, fishing, boating, camping, family time at the beach with or without a pet)

Dog walking, swimming, snorkelling and exercising.

How important is it to you to be able to continue these activities within the entire Reserve?

It is very important to both my physical and mental health. These activities are key elements of my life and I derive much enjoyment from responsibly using the reserve.

Which part of the Reserve do you use most frequently:

Killarney Beach several times a week

West of Killarney Beach to Port Fairy several times a month

East of Killarney Beach to The Cutting several times a week

West of The Cutting towards Warrnambool several times a month

What is your area of interest (For Example: Conservation, Recreational, Cultural, With Animals – Horses or Dogs)

With animals and recreational.....
.....

Is there a specific change that you want made to the Draft Proposal.

I would like no change to the access to the Reserve. The Reserve should not be closed or access limited.....
.....

How important is the Cultural Heritage of the Reserve to you? Not important.....
.....

How important is protection of the Natural Environment and Bird life to you

I would like to see more work on pest plants and feral animals – I see no evidence of domesticated pets or horses negatively impacting birdlife.....
.....

How important is the ability to enjoy recreation activities to you

Extremely important.....
.....

Is your Personal Health and Wellbeing associated with your use of the Reserve? If so in what way.

My daily exercise is to walk my dogs in the Reserve. Also recreational activities like swimming, snorkelling etc represent a major benefit of residing on the coast.....
.....

Do you believe that the current use of the reserve that allows for both Recreation and Conservation should continue?

I strongly believe that the current use of the reserve should continue.....
.....

Do you believe that Recreational Activities should be allowed throughout the Whole Reserve, or do you believe that certain areas should be set aside for conservation only (Eg. No Dog and No Recreational Horse Areas).

I believe that recreational activities should be allowed throughout the whole reserve.....
.....

If you believe dogs and horses should be banned – which areas should they be banned from:

No. Restrictions on Killarney beach work well in peak periods when the beach is very crowded with tourists.....
.....

Do you wish to add any further comments: Focus on the eradication of feral pests ie rabbits, foxes and cats.
.....
.....

Belfast Coast Management Plan: - Individual Submission / Survey

Name:

Signature

Email Address:

Post Code :

Age Range : 50 to 60

Gender : Female

Is this submission to be treated as Confidential : No

How often do you use the Reserve : 5 times a week

.....

How do you Get to the Reserve: .. Walk, Drive, Ride a Bike, Ride a Horse

Drive

What do you mainly use the Reserve for: (For example: Bird watching, Swimming, surfing, kitesurfing, windsurfing, snorkelling, horse riding, dog walking, fishing, boating, camping, family time at the beach with or without a pet)

Dog walking, swimming, snorkelling, bird watching and exercising.

.....

How important is it to you to be able to continue these activities within the entire Reserve?

It is very important to both my physical and mental health. These activities are key elements of my life and I derive much enjoyment from responsibly using the reserve.

.....

.....

Which part of the Reserve do you use most frequently:

Killarney Beach several times a week

West of Killarney Beach to Port Fairy several times a month

East of Killarney Beach to The Cutting several times a week

West of The Cutting towards Warrnambool several times a month

What is your area of interest (For Example: Conservation, Recreational, Cultural, With Animals – Horses or Dogs)

With animals and recreational.....
.....

Is there a specific change that you want made to the Draft Proposal.

I would like no change to the access to the Reserve. The Reserve should not be closed or access limited.....
.....

How important is the Cultural Heritage of the Reserve to you? Not important.....
.....

How important is protection of the Natural Environment and Bird life to you

I would like to see more work on pest plants and feral animals – I see no evidence of domesticated pets or horses negatively impacting birdlife.....
.....

How important is the ability to enjoy recreation activities to you

Extremely important.....
.....

Is your Personal Health and Wellbeing associated with your use of the Reserve? If so in what way.

My daily exercise is to walk my dogs in the Reserve. Also recreational activities like swimming, snorkelling etc represent a major benefit of residing on the coast.....
.....

Do you believe that the current use of the reserve that allows for both Recreation and Conservation should continue?

I strongly believe that the current use of the reserve should continue.....
.....

Do you believe that Recreational Activities should be allowed throughout the Whole Reserve, or do you believe that certain areas should be set aside for conservation only (Eg. No Dog and No Recreational Horse Areas).

I believe that recreational activities should be allowed throughout the whole reserve.....
.....

If you believe dogs and horses should be banned – which areas should they be banned from:

No. Restrictions on Killarney beach work well in peak periods when the beach is very crowded with tourists.....
.....

Do you wish to add any further comments: Focus on the eradication of feral pests ie rabbits, foxes and cats.
.....
.....

Jane Baker
Racehorse Trainer
PO Box 893
Warrnambool VIC 3280

Mobile:

e-mail

Web: www.janebakerracing.com.au

ABN: 19 687 625 872

I am a racehorse trainer of 12 years currently training at Warrnambool. I have stables for up to 15 horses but average around 10 at any one time. The horses that I train are from other trainers, often coming from city environments of which they are tired. The country atmosphere and the ability to exercise them on beaches and in salt water often rejuvenates these horses and extends their careers.

A large number also attend the May Racing Carnival. I employ three staff plus myself. I also use a large number of local businesses including vets, farriers, fuel stations, saddlery, feed merchants, accountants, office suppliers amongst many others. We like to use Rutledge's Cutting to exercise the horses because it is quiet with very few people around and it is not used by large numbers of horses. We are aware of the hooded plover population there and we ride at the waters edge to avoid disturbing them whether it is breeding season or not. I don't believe there is a need to restrict the permit at the Cutting to only four months a year. With daily numbers of 12 or less (as was the case last year) it should be manageable year round or at least for most of the year. A bigger problem at the Cutting for the hooded plover is unleashed dogs which we see regularly. We also like to use Levys Point which we haven't been able to do since its closure. We especially like to use the trails for walking through as it is beneficial to the horses. If Levys Point is reopened along with other beaches it spreads the load of horses and one beach is not then overrun. If there was no or limited beaches available to

Belfast Coast Management Plan: - Individual Survey Submission

Name:

Signature

Email Address: _____

Post Code:

Age Range: 63.

Gender: MALE

Is this submission to be treated as Confidential: NO.

How often do you use the Reserve: WEEKLY - TUES MORN.

How do you Get to the Reserve: .. Walk, Drive, Ride a Bike, Ride a Horse

DRIVE.

What do you mainly use the Reserve for: (For example: Bird watching, Swimming, surfing, kitesurfing, windsurfing, snorkelling, horse riding, dog walking, fishing, boating, camping, family time at the beach with or without a pet)

RUNNING + SWIMMING. + SNORKELLING.

How important is it to you to be able to continue these activities within the entire Reserve?

MOST IMPORTANT.

Which part of the Reserve do you use most frequently:

Killarney Beach YES.

West of Killarney Beach to Port Fairy YES

East of Killarney Beach to The Cutting YES

West of The Cutting towards Warrnambool

What is your area of interest (For Example: Conservation, Recreational, Cultural, With Animals – Horses or Dogs)

RECREATIONAL

Is there a specific change that you want made to the Draft Proposal.

STOP THE DRAFT ~~PROPOSAL~~ PROPOSAL - LET IT STAY THE SAME AS IT IS NOW.

How important is the Cultural Heritage of the Reserve to you? VERY IMPORTANT

How important is protection of the Natural Environment and Bird life to you

MOST IMPORTANT BUT THINGS WILL CHANGE OVER TIME

How important is the ability to enjoy recreation activities to you

IT KEEPS ONE SAFE + SENSIBLE

Is your Personal Health and Wellbeing associated with your use of the Reserve? If so in what way.

AS ABOVE.

Do you believe that the current use of the reserve that allows for both Recreation and Conservation should continue?

YES.

Do you believe that Recreational Activities should be allowed throughout the Whole Reserve, or do you believe that certain areas should be set aside for conservation only (Eg. No Dog and No Recreational Horse Areas).

LEAVE IT THE WAY IT IS.

If you believe dogs and horses should be banned – which areas should they be banned from:

NO BANS.

Do you wish to add any further comments: YES - LET THE PROTESTORS.

LEARN TO RESPECT OTHER PEOPLE.

LIVE + LET LIVE.

Belfast Coast Management Plan: - Individual Submission / Survey

Name:

Signature

Email Address:

Post Code :

Age Range : *60's*

Gender : *female*

Is this submission to be treated as Confidential :

How often do you use the Reserve : *Randomly*

How do you Get to the Reserve: .. Walk, Drive, Ride a Bike, Ride a Horse

Drive

What do you mainly use the Reserve for: (For example: Bird watching, Swimming, surfing, kitesurfing, windsurfing, snorkelling, horse riding, dog walking, fishing, boating, camping, family time at the beach with or without a pet)

Walking

How important is it to you to be able to continue these activities within the entire Reserve?

Important

Which part of the Reserve do you use most frequently:

Killarney Beach

West of Killarney Beach to Port Fairy

East of Killarney Beach to The Cutting

West of The Cutting towards Warrnambool

What is your area of interest (For Example: Conservation, Recreational, Cultural, With Animals – Horses or Dogs)

Recreational

Is there a specific change that you want made to the Draft Proposal.

Surely it can all be shared

How important is the Cultural Heritage of the Reserve to you?

Very

How important is protection of the Natural Environment and Bird life to you

Very

How important is the ability to enjoy recreation activities to you

Very

Is your Personal Health and Wellbeing associated with your use of the Reserve? If so in what way.

Definitely yes – It's a wonderful
space

Do you believe that the current use of the reserve that allows for both Recreation and Conservation should continue?

Yes, with wisdom

Do you believe that Recreational Activities should be allowed throughout the Whole Reserve, or do you believe that certain areas should be set aside for conservation only (Eg. No Dog and No Recreational Horse Areas).

Yes, but freedom to use it with
some seasonal closure to protect
nesting.

If you believe dogs and horses should be banned – which areas should they be banned from:

No.

Do you wish to add any further comments:

Please use
wisdom & common sense so that
is available for all uses.

Belfast Coast Management Plan: - Individual Survey Submission

Name:

Signature

Email Address:

Post Code:

Age Range: 60 - 70

Gender: MALE

Is this submission to be treated as Confidential:

How often do you use the Reserve: 4 - 6 TIMES YR.

How do you Get to the Reserve: .. Walk, Drive, Ride a Bike, Ride a Horse

What do you mainly use the Reserve for: (For example: Bird watching, Swimming, surfing, kitesurfing, windsurfing, snorkelling, horse riding, dog walking, fishing, boating, camping, family time at the beach with or without a pet)

How important is it to you to be able to continue these activities within the entire Reserve?

VERY

Which part of the Reserve do you use most frequently:

Killarney Beach 1

West of Killarney Beach to Port Fairy 3

East of Killarney Beach to The Cutting 2

West of The Cutting towards Warrnambool 4

What is your area of interest (For Example: Conservation, Recreational, Cultural, With Animals – Horses or Dogs)

Is there a specific change that you want made to the Draft Proposal.

How important is the Cultural Heritage of the Reserve to you? VERY

How important is protection of the Natural Environment and Bird life to you

VERY

How important is the ability to enjoy recreation activities to you

VERY

Is your Personal Health and Wellbeing associated with your use of the Reserve? If so in what way.

Do you believe that the current use of the reserve that allows for both Recreation and Conservation should continue?

YES

Do you believe that Recreational Activities should be allowed throughout the Whole Reserve, or do you believe that certain areas should be set aside for conservation/only (Eg. No Dog and No Recreational Horse Areas).

If you believe dogs and horses should be banned – which areas should they be banned from:

NOT BANNED. BY ON LEADS OR CONTROL.

Do you wish to add any further comments:

Belfast Coast Management Plan: - Individual Survey Submission

Name:

Signature

Email Address:

Post Code:

Age Range: 60 to 70

Gender: Male

Is this submission to be treated as Confidential: No

How often do you use the Reserve: Once a week

How do you Get to the Reserve: .. Walk, Drive, Ride a Bike, Ride a Horse

Drive

What do you mainly use the Reserve for: (For example: Bird watching, Swimming, surfing, kitesurfing, windsurfing, snorkelling, horse riding, dog walking, fishing, boating, camping, family time at the beach with or without a pet)

Fishing, Getting fish bait, spew worms
off the sand, clitters out of water.

How important is it to you to be able to continue these activities within the entire Reserve?

Very important - part of life style.

Which part of the Reserve do you use most frequently:

Killarney Beach

West of Killarney Beach to Port Fairy

East of Killarney Beach to The Cutting East

West of The Cutting towards Warrnambool

What is your area of interest (For Example: Conservation, Recreational, Cultural, With Animals – Horses or Dogs)

Recreational

Is there a specific change that you want made to the Draft Proposal.

Want to continue to use the beach as I've always done.

How important is the Cultural Heritage of the Reserve to you? Nil

How important is protection of the Natural Environment and Bird life to you

~~2~~ As a country person looking after the environment, second nature I do not cause

How important is the ability to enjoy recreation activities to you Very important, part of my life. any damage to the environment

Is your Personal Health and Wellbeing associated with your use of the Reserve? If so in what way.

Yes keeping active

Do you believe that the current use of the reserve that allows for both Recreation and Conservation should continue?

YES.

Do you believe that Recreational Activities should be allowed throughout the Whole Reserve, or do you believe that certain areas should be set aside for conservation only (Eg. No Dog and No Recreational Horse Areas).

YES I believe the current activities should remain thought out.

If you believe dogs and horses should be banned – which areas should they be banned from:

They should not be banned.

Do you wish to add any further comments:

Leave beaches as they are, also the problem to the environment is the foxes.

Submission template for Draft Belfast Coastal Reserve Management Plan

About you:

Your name

Your Organisation (if relevant): _____

Postcode: _____

Email or Postal address:

THIS SUBMISSION IS: **CONFIDENTIAL** **NOT CONFIDENTIAL** Date: 15/3/18

Your Comments:

Please Note – The following information will be made publically available.

Main reason for interest: *(such as local resident, visitor to parks, tourism operator, environmental interest, business operator, education interest, scientific interest)*

Regular visitor with my wife to Port Fairy and region, for cultural (Port Fairy Spring Music Festival) and recreational reasons (bird watching, landscape, beach/bush walking, interest in Indigenous culture and history)

How often do you or your organisation use the reserve?

- Daily Weekly Monthly A couple of times a year Rarely Never

How do you or your organisation mainly use the reserve?

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Walking or running | <input type="checkbox"/> Dog walking | <input type="checkbox"/> Using the beach (swimming and surfing) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Horse riding | <input type="checkbox"/> Horse training | <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteering |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Camping | <input type="checkbox"/> Hunting | <input type="checkbox"/> Fishing/boating |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Picnicking | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Birdwatching | <input type="checkbox"/> Socialising |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____ | | |

Which part(s) of the reserve do you or your organisation most frequently use?

- West of Killarney (Port Fairy side) Between Killarney and Big Baldy
 East of Big Baldy (Warrnambool side) Not sure

About the vision- Belfast Coastal Reserve, 15 years from now...:

How supportive are you of the vision for the Belfast Coastal Reserve?

- Very supportive Supportive Not sure/Don't know
 Unsupportive Very supportive

Comments: (Your submission can be as short or long as you wish. Put comments under relevant headings corresponding to plan sections or strategies, noting page and paragraph numbers. Attach more pages if required).

The Vision seems fine.

The key issue will be whether sufficient resources are provided to enable Parks Vic and partners to achieve the vision. The Government does not have a good track record of adequately funding environmental policies.

Key management theme #1: Cultural landscape and living heritage

How supportive are you of the strategies for 'Cultural landscape and living heritage' included in the draft management plan?

- Very supportive Supportive Not sure/Don't know
 Unsupportive Very supportive

Comments: (Your submission can be as short or long as you wish. Put comments under relevant headings corresponding to plan sections or strategies, noting page and paragraph numbers. Attach more pages if required).

The strategy appears sound – whether it can be and is implemented successfully to achieve the Vision will depend on funding for the whole plan, and this part, to ensure that the resources (people and activities) needed are available, over the decades ahead.

Key management theme #2: Healthy Country

How supportive are you of the strategies for 'Healthy Country' included in the draft management plan?

- Very supportive Supportive Not sure/Don't know
 Unsupportive Very supportive

Comments: (Your submission can be as short or long as you wish. Put comments under relevant headings corresponding to plan sections or strategies, noting page and paragraph numbers. Attach more pages if required).

The Conservation Zone may need to be extended, or the activities within the Conservation and Recreation zone limited for certain periods, to ensure that the environmental values are protected, and especially that the use of the beach by Hooded Plovers and other birds is not threatened during key breeding periods.

Key management theme #3: Recreation and use

How supportive are you of the strategies for 'Recreation and use' included in the draft management plan?

- Very supportive Supportive Not sure/Don't know
 Unsupportive Very supportive

Comments: *(Your submission can be as short or long as you wish. Put comments under relevant headings corresponding to plan sections or strategies, noting page and paragraph numbers. Attach more pages if required).*

I strongly support the passive recreational uses by people, but have strong reservations about dogs and horses. Use of the area for off-leash dog walking is not compatible with protection of shore breeding birds during the breeding season, and should not be allowed. Hooded Plovers don't know which are Recreation Areas and which are fully (?) protected Conservation areas. These birds are critically endangered, and the Government through Parks Vic has responsibility to ensure their protection.

Why, under the list of permitted/not permitted activities, is Bird Watching restricted to designated tracks, but this restriction is not applied to Orienteering and Walking/Running? Bird Watching is less threatening to the environment than either of the latter – and bird watchers are critically aware of the need for protection of the environment, given how threatened so many bird species are.

Carefully controlled and monitored horse riding by small groups out of the breeding season, but should not be allowed during the breeding season. Potential damage to dunes, vegetation and Indigenous artifacts is an all-year risk. As with other aspects of these plans to achieve the Vision, sufficient funding and resources (rangers, education programs etc) will be essential to manage these threats

I do not believe that commercial racehorse training activities are compatible with the Vision or the management proposals to achieve the vision – and indeed, the statements within the Plan clearly recognise that this activity is not consistent with the Vision and the need to protect flora, fauna and cultural artifacts. It should certainly not be allowed at Rutledge's Cutting – nor should recreational horse riding be permitted there. Along any length of the beach where horse training were allowed during shorebird breeding season, the Government would be failing in its duty to protect threatened natural species. If such activity were allowed, it would be essential to provide close monitoring by Parks Vic staff to ensure conditions of use were strictly adhered to, with immediate banning of trainers who abused these conditions. It is incomprehensible to me that the Plan seems to suggest increased use for horse training.

Key management theme #4: Managing in partnership

How supportive are you of the strategies for 'Managing in partnership' included in the draft management plan?

- Very supportive Supportive Not sure/Don't know
 Unsupportive Very supportive

Comments: *(Your submission can be as short or long as you wish. Put comments under relevant headings corresponding to plan sections or strategies, noting page and paragraph numbers. Attach more pages if required).*

Involvement of local groups is essential – the Traditional Owners, adjacent landowners (especially where farming activities may impact adversely on the Reserve's natural environmental values), and especially local naturalist groups.

Key management theme #5: Research and monitoring

How supportive are you of the strategies for 'Research and monitoring' included in the draft management plan?

- Very supportive Supportive Not sure/Don't know
 Unsupportive Very supportive

Comments: *(Your submission can be as short or long as you wish. Put comments under relevant headings corresponding to plan sections or strategies, noting page and paragraph numbers. Attach more pages if required).*

Research, properly funded with expert involvement (e.g., local university research group(s)?) is essential – first and urgently, to provide baseline data on the current state of the reserve's ecological values, flora and fauna. Ongoing monitoring over the years ahead will then be needed to ensure that permitted activities are not causing unforeseen damage – and if they are, management controls would need to be revised.

Belfast Coast Management Plan: - Individual Submission / Survey

Name:

Signature

Email Address:

Post Code :

Age Range : 47

Gender : Male

Is this submission to be treated as Confidential : No

How often do you use the Reserve : 10 times a year

How do you Get to the Reserve: .. Walk, Drive, Ride a Bike, Ride a Horse

Drive

What do you mainly use the Reserve for: (For example: Bird watching, Swimming, surfing, kitesurfing, windsurfing, snorkelling, horse riding, dog walking, fishing, boating, camping, family time at the beach with or without a pet)

snorkelling, fishing, swimming, dogs

How important is it to you to be able to continue these activities within the entire Reserve?

Extremely important

Which part of the Reserve do you use most frequently:

Killarney Beach Yes

West of Killarney Beach to Port Fairy

East of Killarney Beach to The Cutting Yes

West of The Cutting towards Warrnambool

What is your area of interest (For Example: Conservation, Recreational, Cultural, With Animals – Horses or Dogs)

Recreational

Is there a specific change that you want made to the Draft Proposal.

Yeah none of it

How important is the Cultural Heritage of the Reserve to you? Not important

How important is protection of the Natural Environment and Bird life to you

Everything is important but not at the detriment of peoples activities

How important is the ability to enjoy recreation activities to you

Extremely important

Is your Personal Health and Wellbeing associated with your use of the Reserve? If so in what way.

Not really just physical activities

Do you believe that the current use of the reserve that allows for both Recreation and Conservation should continue?

Yes

Do you believe that Recreational Activities should be allowed throughout the Whole Reserve, or do you believe that certain areas should be set aside for conservation only (Eg. No Dog and No Recreational Horse Areas).

Yes

If you believe dogs and horses should be banned – which areas should they be banned from:

Definitely not

Do you wish to add any further comments: Just leave it

Belfast Coast Management Plan: - Individual Submission / Survey

Name:

Signature

Email Address:

Post Code : 3300

Age Range : 60^s

Gender : MALE

Is this submission to be treated as Confidential :

How often do you use the Reserve : OPEN

How do you Get to the Reserve: .. Walk, Drive, Ride a Bike, Ride a Horse

DRIVE, WALK

What do you mainly use the Reserve for: (For example: Bird watching, Swimming, surfing, kitesurfing, windsurfing, snorkelling, horse riding, dog walking, fishing, boating, camping, family time at the beach with or without a pet)

Fishing, BOATING, CAMPING

How important is it to you to be able to continue these activities within the entire Reserve?

VERY IMPORTANT

Which part of the Reserve do you use most frequently:

Killarney Beach BASIN AREA, BOAT RAMP, CAMPING GROUNTS,

West of Killarney Beach to Port Fairy

East of Killarney Beach to The Cutting

West of The Cutting towards Warrnambool

What is your area of interest (For Example: Conservation, Recreational, Cultural, With Animals – Horses or Dogs)

RECREATIONAL.

Is there a specific change that you want made to the Draft Proposal.

MORE PARKING AREAS,

How important is the Cultural Heritage of the Reserve to you?

NOT THAT IMPORTANT IF IT TAKES AWAY PEOPLE'S ENJOYMENT.

How important is protection of the Natural Environment and Bird life to you

GOOD SIGNAGE TO MAKE PEOPLE AWARE OF ENVIRONMENT AND BIRD LIFE

How important is the ability to enjoy recreation activities to you

VERY IMPORTANT

Is your Personal Health and Wellbeing associated with your use of the Reserve? If so in what way.

WALKING, RELAXING, SWIMMING

Do you believe that the current use of the reserve that allows for both Recreation and Conservation should continue?

YES.

Do you believe that Recreational Activities should be allowed throughout the Whole Reserve, or do you believe that certain areas should be set aside for conservation only (Eg. No Dog and No Recreational Horse Areas).

THESE AREAS ARE VERY POPULAR AND SHOULD BE ALLOWED FOR ALL PUBLIC TO ENJOY

If you believe dogs and horses should be banned – which areas should they be banned from:

Do you wish to add any further comments: IF THIS AREA IS CLOSED, WE AS A FAMILY WOULD CONSIDER OTHER PLACES TO HOLIDAY AND SPEND OUR DOLLARS ELSEWHERE

Belfast Coast Management Plan: - Individual Submission / Survey

Name:

Signature

Email Address:

Post Code :

Age Range : 60

Gender : MALE

Is this submission to be treated as Confidential : NO

How often do you use the Reserve : QUITE OFTEN

How do you Get to the Reserve: .. Walk, Drive, Ride a Bike, Ride a Horse

DRIVE

What do you mainly use the Reserve for: (For example: Bird watching, Swimming, surfing, kitesurfing, windsurfing, snorkelling, horse riding, dog walking, fishing, boating, camping, family time at the beach with or without a pet)

FISHING COLLECTING BAIT. SWIMMING

How important is it to you to be able to continue these activities within the entire Reserve?

VERY IMPORTANT

Which part of the Reserve do you use most frequently:

Killarney Beach

West of Killarney Beach to Port Fairy

East of Killarney Beach to The Cutting

West of The Cutting towards Warrnambool

What is your area of interest (For Example: Conservation, Recreational, Cultural, With Animals – Horses or Dogs)

RECREATIONAL FISHING DIVING

Is there a specific change that you want made to the Draft Proposal.

YES LEAVE THE WHOLE AREA ALONE THIS

DRAFT IS THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS A SANCTUARY

How important is the Cultural Heritage of the Reserve to you? VERY

How important is protection of the Natural Environment and Bird life to you

VERY BUT THERE IS NO REASON WHY PEOPLE
AND WILDLIFE CANNOT CO-EXIST.

How important is the ability to enjoy recreation activities to you

VERY IMPORTANT

Is your Personal Health and Wellbeing associated with your use of the Reserve? If so in what way.

I AM AT PEACE WITH THE WORLD WHEN FISHING
AT THE RESERVE.

Do you believe that the current use of the reserve that allows for both Recreation and Conservation should continue?

CAN SEE NO REASON TO CHANGE THE CURRENT
SITUATION LEAVE WELL ENOUGH ALONE.

Do you believe that Recreational Activities should be allowed throughout the Whole Reserve, or do you believe that certain areas should be set aside for conservation only (Eg. No Dog and No Recreational Horse Areas).

NO

If you believe dogs and horses should be banned – which areas should they be banned from:

NONE LEAVE THE PLACE ALONE

Do you wish to add any further comments:

WHEN I FIND OUT WHAT THE HIDDEN AGENDA IS I
WILL COMMENT FURTHER

Belfast Coast Management Plan: - Individual Survey Submission

Name:

Signature

Email Address:

Post Code: 3300

Age Range: 33

Gender: MALE

Is this submission to be treated as Confidential: NO

How often do you use the Reserve: ONCE / WEEK FROM OCT -> APRIL

How do you Get to the Reserve: .. Walk, Drive, Ride a Bike, Ride a Horse

DRIVE TO CAR PARK

What do you mainly use the Reserve for: (For example: Bird watching, Swimming, surfing, kitesurfing, windsurfing, snorkelling, horse riding, dog walking, fishing, boating, camping, family time at the beach with or without a pet)

FISHING / GETTING BAIT

How important is it to you to be able to continue these activities within the entire Reserve?

EXTREMELY IMPORTANT!

WITHOUT BEING ABLE TO USE THIS RESERVE FOR

BAIT FISHING IS IMPOSSIBLE! ALL LEISURE IS GONE

Which part of the Reserve do you use most frequently:

Killarney Beach

West of Killarney Beach to Port Fairy

East of Killarney Beach to The Cutting

West of The Cutting towards Warrnambool

What is your area of interest (For Example: Conservation, Recreational, Cultural, With Animals – Horses or Dogs)

RECREATIONAL

Is there a specific change that you want made to the Draft Proposal.

THE PROPOSAL REJECTED!

How important is the Cultural Heritage of the Reserve to you?

How important is protection of the Natural Environment and Bird life to you

MINIMAL

How important is the ability to enjoy recreation activities to you

VERY IT'S A WAY OF LIFE!

Is your Personal Health and Wellbeing associated with your use of the Reserve? If so in what way.

YES, FISHING IS A GREAT SPORT & INTEREST
AND PART OF LIFE TO LOOK FORWARD TO.

Do you believe that the current use of the reserve that allows for both Recreation and Conservation should continue?

YES.

Do you believe that Recreational Activities should be allowed throughout the Whole Reserve, or do you believe that certain areas should be set aside for conservation only (Eg. No Dog and No Recreational Horse Areas).

ALLOWED THROUGHOUT FOR EVERYONE TO SHARE
& ENJOY.

If you believe dogs and horses should be banned – which areas should they be banned from:

NO.

Do you wish to add any further comments: LEAVE IT ALONE.