

This Management Plan for Cape Liptrap Coastal Park is approved for implementation. Its purpose is to direct all aspects of management in the park until the plan is reviewed. A Draft Management Plan for the park was published in October 2001. Eighty-three submissions were received and have been considered in developing this approved Management Plan.

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**CAPE LIPTRAP COASTAL PARK  
MANAGEMENT PLAN**

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### **Disclaimer**

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

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## FOREWORD

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Cape Liptrap Coastal Park features spectacular coastal scenery, including extensive rock platforms, sheer cliffs, sea caves, rock stacks, sandy beaches and sheltered coves. With such a diverse range of landform features it is no wonder the park is recognised as a site of national geological and geomorphological significance.

The park has many other important natural values, including extensive heathlands and woodlands and provides habitat for a number of rare and threatened species. The area has a fascinating history, and many cultural features are protected within the park. They include Aboriginal middens, the Cape Liptrap lighthouse, and limekilns at Walkerville South and Bell Point.

There are numerous opportunities for visitors to enjoy the park. Walking along the sandy beaches, camping at Bear Gully, admiring the coastal views from Cape Liptrap, swimming or surfing at the Venus Bay Beaches, and learning about the park's lime-burning heritage at Walkerville are among the many experiences on offer.

The long-term management framework established in this plan will protect the significant natural and cultural values of the park, whilst providing appropriate recreational opportunities.

I thank those individuals and organisations who made submissions on the draft plan, and I look forward to the community's ongoing support for the management of this park.

**Hon John Thwaites MP**  
**Minister for Environment**

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## APPROVED MANAGEMENT PLAN

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This Approved Management Plan, prepared under section 18 of the *National Parks Act 1975* (Vic.) is approved for implementation. The plan provides the basis and direction for the future management of Cape Liptrap Coastal Park.

It was finalised following careful consideration of the eighty-three submissions received on the draft plan released in October 2001.

**PROF LYNSAY NEILSON**  
Secretary to the  
Department of Sustainability  
and Environment

**MARK STONE**  
Chief Executive  
Parks Victoria

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## SUMMARY

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Cape Liptrap Coastal Park (4175 ha) protects extensive Heathland and Coastal Forest vegetation communities, including 270 species of vascular plants. Several rare fauna species occur in the park, including the Hooded Plover, Swamp Antechinus and Powerful Owl. The area also provides a vegetated coastal corridor for migratory birds.

The park contains one of the most interesting and complex geological sequences in the State, ranging from ancient Cambrian rocks to recent sands. There are spectacular coastal landforms at Cape Liptrap and Waratah Bay.

The park is a popular destination for visitors as well as residents of the region, particularly the Township of Walkerville and the settlement of Venus Bay.

Typically for a coastal area, swimming, surfing, camping, fishing, walking and boating are popular recreational activities. Other pastimes in the area include horse riding, gemstone fossicking and shellfish collecting.

Overnight accommodation is available in the nearby townships, caravan parks and other private accommodation. An informal camping area is provided in the park at Bear Gully. The park is used mostly by day visitors.

Future management will be based on maintaining the good condition of ecosystems, providing a range of appropriate day-use facilities, and undertaking enhanced information and interpretation programs.

The major management proposals for the park are summarised below:

- The ecological condition and diversity of the park's vegetation communities will be improved by restoring age-class diversity.
- An ecological fire management plan for the park will be developed.
- Pest plants, animals and pathogens will be monitored, controlled and where possible eradicated to protect the park's natural values.
- The limekilns and associated relics at Walkerville will be managed in accordance with the Burra Charter and the approved Heritage Action Plan.
- A Master Plan will be prepared for visitor facilities at Venus Bay Beaches to provide high-quality day visitor facilities, upgraded carparking and the separation of vehicle and pedestrian access.
- A variety of walking opportunities will be provided within the park, from short nature trails to extended walks along remote sections of coastline.
- Horse riding will be provided for on the ocean beach between Arch Rock and the outfall pipeline.
- Dogs on leads will be allowed at three high-use beach areas at Waratah Bay, Walkerville and Venus Bay but prohibited in all other areas of the park.
- Information shelters and interpretative signs will be established at key visitor destinations within the park.
- A Friends group will be supported and encouraged to participate in activities that protect and conserve the parks values.

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

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## 1.1 Location and planning area

Cape Liptrap Coastal Park is located in South Gippsland, 180 km south-east of Melbourne (figure 1).

The planning area includes the park (4175 ha), which encompasses the coastline from the residential subdivision at Waratah Bay westwards to Point Smythe on Anderson Inlet to the low water mark, and the Cape Liptrap Lighthouse Reserve (0.03 ha), which is encompassed by the coastal park.

The park encloses the Township of Walkerville (Walkerville North and Walkerville South) and abuts the residential subdivisions of Venus Bay, Promontory Views Estate and Waratah Bay.

A number of public land reserves once managed by local committees of management are included in the park. The Walkerville Foreshore Committee of Management continues to manage the foreshore and caravan park at Walkerville, adjacent to the park.

## 1.2 Creation of the park

Cape Liptrap Coastal Park was included in Schedule 3 of the *National Parks Act 1975* (Vic.) as a result of the *National Parks (Amendment) Act 1997* (Vic.) and was

proclaimed on 4 July 1997. The park includes the areas recommended for inclusion in a Venus Bay–Waratah Bay Coastal Park by the former Land Conservation Council in the South Gippsland Area District 2 Final Recommendations (LCC 1982), except for part of the Walkerville Foreshore Reserve.

## 1.3 Developing the management plan

This Approved Management Plan has been prepared after a process of research, planning and consultation with key stakeholders, including the Department of Natural Resources and Environment (now Department of Sustainability and Environment), South Gippsland Shire Council, Gippsland Coastal Board and Walkerville Foreshore Committee of Management.

A public meeting attended by 52 people was held in April 2000 at Tarwin Lower at which various issues affecting the park were discussed.

Eighty-three submissions received on the Draft Management Plan, published for public comment in October 2001, have been considered in developing this Management Plan.

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## 2 BASIS

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### 2.1 Regional context

Cape Liptrap Coastal Park plays an important role in the tourism and holiday accommodation sector within South Gippsland. The park receives more than 250 000 day visits a year. Most visitors stay in holiday homes, caravan parks or rental accommodation in the Township of Walkerville and the coastal settlements of Waratah Bay, Promontory View Estate, Sandy Point and Venus Bay. The park is also accessible to day visitors from the Latrobe Valley, South Gippsland and the south-eastern suburbs of Melbourne.

The park is one of several natural attractions in South Gippsland, and is part of the Phillip Island and Gippsland Discovery Tourism Region. Other popular destinations include:

- Wilsons Promontory National Park - one of Victoria's most loved national parks - features granite mountains, sandy beaches and diverse plant communities, including heathlands, woodlands and rainforest. The park is also popular for camping, short walks and overnight hiking;
- Corner Inlet and Nooramunga Marine and Coastal Parks (Corner Inlet Ramsar site) - consist of a chain of barrier islands, tidal mudflats, saltmarsh and sheltered waters; and are recognised internationally for its wading bird habitat and is popular for, boating, fishing and birdwatching;
- Bunurong Marine Park which features rugged sandstone cliffs, broad rock platforms and spectacular underwater reefs and provides opportunities for boating, fishing and snorkelling;
- Shallow Inlet Marine and Coastal Park which protects a large tidal embayment and sand spit which are popular for boating, fishing and windsurfing.

### 2.2 Park values and significance

Cape Liptrap Coastal Park makes a valuable contribution to Victoria's parks and reserves system, which aims to protect viable, representative samples of the State's natural

environments occurring on public land. The park provides opportunities for visitors to enjoy and appreciate natural and cultural values, and makes an important contribution to tourism and the economy of local coastal settlements.

The park is assigned the International Union for the Conservation of Nature Category II of the United Nations List of National Parks and Protected Areas. Category II areas are managed primarily for conservation and appropriate recreation.

Significant features and opportunities are outlined below.

#### Natural values:

- extensive heathland and coastal forest vegetation communities;
- the occurrence of about 270 species of flowering plants, including 27 orchids;
- thirty threatened fauna species, including ten species listed as threatened under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* (Vic.), 17 migratory bird species and ten threatened flora species;
- one of the most interesting and complex geological sequences in the State, ranging from ancient Cambrian rocks to Recent sands;
- spectacular coastal landforms at Cape Liptrap, Arch Rock and at Walkerville.

#### Cultural values:

- numerous middens and other significant Aboriginal sites;
- relics of the lime-burning industry at Walkerville;
- Cape Liptrap lighthouse.

#### Tourism and recreational opportunities:

- spectacular and diverse coastal scenery;
- opportunities for fishing, nature observation, camping, and other forms of passive recreation in natural settings;

- outstanding walks along a scenic coastline and access to beaches suitable for swimming and surfing.

### 2.3 Past land use

The park is a narrow coastal strip of largely unmodified natural systems that lacked agricultural value and had limited previous use. The park has been subject to a range of past land uses including timber harvesting, grazing by domestic stock and lime burning and quarrying.

Grazing runs were established in South Gippsland in the 1850s and stock continued to graze the dunes between Arch Rock and Venus Bay until the 1960s.

Limestone was quarried at Walkerville from 1878 and burnt in kilns to produce quick lime. Another kiln and jetty were established at nearby Bell Point. Quarrying resulted in significant soil disturbance and slumping of the coastal cliffs. Substantial quantities of timber were removed from the hinterland for burning in the kilns. The kilns ceased operating in 1926, when rising transport costs and the displacement of lime by cement in the building industry made the industry unprofitable.

A lighthouse was established at Cape Liptrap in 1913 to improve the safety of coastal shipping.

Clearing and grazing development continued in the hinterland, until the remaining native vegetation was largely confined to public land reserved for forestry or recreational purposes. A series of local committees of management were formed to manage areas such as Walkerville Foreshore Reserve, Venus Bay Foreshore Reserve, Bear Gully Reserve and Waratah Bay Foreshore. Some of these reserves were managed by voluntary committees, others by the local Shire.

Settlements have been developed at Venus Bay, Promontory View Estate and Waratah Bay as a result of various subdivisions for holiday houses made in the 1950s.

The beaches have long been and remain popular destinations for recreation and fishing.

### 2.4 The park visitor

The park is a popular destination for visitors as well as residents of the region, particularly those from the Township of Walkerville and the settlement of Venus Bay. Walkerville township has a population of approximately 360 and Venus Bay about 500, although the number of residents in holiday periods increases significantly. It is expected that the number of residents in the township and settlements will rise as retirees and others seek to live permanently or spend more time at their holiday homes on the coast (GCB 2001).

The park is sufficiently close to greater Melbourne to receive increased visitor use in the future. The potential growth of Walkerville and Venus Bay is limited by lack of available land and difficulties with wastewater management and water supply. Currently, both rely on bore or rain fed-water supplies and septic sewerage systems.

As is typical for coastal areas, swimming, surfing, camping, fishing, walking and boating are popular pursuits. Other activities in the area include horse riding, gemstone fossicking and shellfish collecting.

The park is used mostly by day visitors, who tend to congregate at Waratah Bay (Walkerville) and Venus Bay. The park receives more than 250 000 day visits a year, of which approximately 200 000 day visits occur at the Venus Bay Beaches. Tracks and firebreaks within the park are used for bushwalking.

Although most visitors use overnight accommodation in the neighbouring coastal townships and settlements, caravan parks and other private accommodation, around 16 000 camper nights occur at the informal camping area at Bear Gully.

### 2.5 LCC recommendations and guidelines

In 1982, the former Land Conservation Council (LCC) recommended that the park be used to provide opportunities for recreation and education, as well as the conservation of the park's natural features. The LCC also recommended that park zoning accommodate the traditional recreation activities associated

with the area including surfing, fishing, gemstone collection, camping, walking and horse riding (LCC 1982). The offshore rock stacks were also included within the park.

The park is managed in accordance with recommendations of the former LCC, operational policies and other plans and guidelines, including:

- Gippsland Fire Protection Plan (NRE 1999a);
- Code of Practice for Fire Management on Public Land (CNR 1995a);
- Directions in Environmental Management (Parks Victoria 1998a);
- Gippsland Natural Discovery Regional Tourism Development Plan (Tourism Victoria 1997);
- South Gippsland Planning Scheme (South Gippsland Shire Council 1999);
- Victorian Coastal Strategy (VCC 2002);
- Integrated Coastal Planning for Gippsland – Coastal Action Plan (Gippsland Coastal Board in prep.).

## 2.6 Legislation

Cape Liptrap Coastal Park is reserved and managed under the National Parks Act. The Act requires the Secretary to the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) [formerly Department of Natural Resources and Environment] to preserve and protect the natural condition of the park and its natural and other features and, subject to this, to provide for the use of the park by the public for enjoyment, recreation and education. Appropriate research activities are also provided for under the Act.

The provisions of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cwlth) apply to the planning area with respect to actions that have, will have or are likely to have a significant impact on matters of national environmental significance.

Issues relating to native title are dealt with according to the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cwlth).

Rare and threatened flora and fauna are managed in accordance with *Flora and Fauna*

*Guarantee Act 1988* (Vic.) and approved Action Statements.

Sections 4 (Objects) and 18 of the National Parks Act set the framework for the management of the park.

### Park management aims

Management aims for the park, consistent with the government accepted LCC recommendations and legislation, are as follows.

#### Conservation

- Preserve and protect the natural environment.
- Allow natural environmental processes to continue with the minimum of interference.
- Maintain biodiversity.
- Conserve features of archaeological, historical and cultural significance.
- Protect water catchments and streams.
- Protect human life, the park and adjacent lands from injury by fire.
- Eradicate or otherwise control introduced plants, animals and diseases.

#### The park visit

- Provide opportunities for appropriate recreation, education and tourism.
- Promote and encourage an appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of the park's natural and cultural values and its recreational opportunities.
- Encourage appropriate use of the park and visitor behaviour, and foster a conservation ethic in visitors.
- Take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of visitors.

#### Other

- Provide for and encourage scientific research, surveys and monitoring that will contribute to a better understanding and management of the park.
- Co-operate with local, State and interstate government authorities, the community

and other interested organisations to assist  
in the park's management.

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## 3 STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

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### 3.1 Park vision

A future visitor to Cape Liptrap Coastal Park will find a park characterised by spectacular and diverse coastal scenery, and the opportunity for a wide range of recreational activities. It is a place favoured by many for holidays by the sea.

The park remains a haven to several rare species of native plants and animals and has significant areas of heathland and coastal forest. The condition of the range of ecosystems is maintained by the careful application of prescribed burning, based on research and monitoring which continues to improve understanding of the management requirements for long-term conservation of biodiversity.

The park provides excellent opportunities for beach activities including swimming, surfing and fishing, as well as walking and sightseeing. It remains a focal point for the neighbouring townships and settlements and makes a major contribution to the local economy.

Visitor numbers have increased but high-quality day-use facilities have prevented adverse environmental impacts. Comprehensive information, interpretation and education services add to the interest and enjoyment of a visit.

Effective community liaison has resulted in strong support for park management and the formation of volunteer groups who undertake projects in the park.

### 3.2 Zoning

A park management zoning scheme has been developed to:

- provide a geographic framework with which to manage the park;
- indicate which management directions have priority in different parts of the park;
- indicate the types and levels of use appropriate throughout the park;

- assist in minimising existing and potential conflicts between uses and activities, or between these and the protection of park values;
- provide a basis for assessing the suitability of future activities and development proposals.

Two management zones apply to the park; Conservation, and Conservation and Recreation.

In addition, a Special Protection Area – Cultural Values is designated, with management requirements additional to those of the underlying primary zones.

Table 1 specifies the management zones and overlay characteristics, and figure 2 shows their location.

### 3.3 Management directions

Major management directions for the park are outlined below.

#### Conservation

- The ecological condition of the existing diverse and intact forest, heathland and headland communities will be improved by restoring age-class diversity.
- The species diversity, structure and age-class diversity of the coastal dune communities will be restored in the long-term.
- The knowledge of how to conserve the park's natural values with minimal disturbance to the environment will be improved.
- An ecological fire management plan for the park will be developed.
- Pest plants, animals and pathogens will be monitored, controlled and where possible eradicated to protect the parks natural values.
- Flora and fauna listed under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act will be managed in accordance with approved Action Statements.

**TABLE 1 MANAGEMENT ZONING**

<b>ZONE/ OVERLAY</b>	<b>AREA/LOCATION</b>	<b>VALUES</b>	<b>GENERAL MANAGEMENT AIM</b>
Conservation Zone	3949 ha, 95% of the Park. More remote sections of coastline within the park between Venus Bay and Cape Liptrap, heathland and woodland areas near Walkerville and Waratah Bay.	Broad areas containing sensitive natural environments or ecosystems.	Protect sensitive natural environments and provide for minimal-impact recreation activities and simple visitor facilities, subject to ensuring minimal interference with the natural processes.
Conservation and Recreation Zone	226 ha, 5% of the park. The more heavily used areas accessible from the neighbouring township of Walkerville and the settlements at Venus Bay.	Broad natural areas that can sustain significant levels of recreation.	Protect less sensitive natural environments and provide for sustainable dispersed recreational activities and small-scale recreation facilities without significant impact on natural processes.
Special Protection Area – Cultural Values	11 ha, 0.3% of the park. Areas at Walkerville South and Bell Point associated with the lime-burning industry.	Discrete significant areas requiring special attention.	Protect specific natural or cultural values in specific areas or sites where a special management focus is required.

- The limekilns and associated relics at Walkerville will be managed in accordance with the Burra Charter and the approved Heritage Action Plan.
- Fire will be managed appropriately to preserve natural and cultural values and protect life and assets.

#### **The park visit**

- Information shelters and interpretative signs will be established and maintained at key visitor destinations within the park.
- Interpretation of the cultural values, management and history of Walkerville Limekilns and the Cape Liptrap will be enhanced.
- Public access to beaches will be managed to prevent the degradation of sand dunes, cliffs and other sensitive areas.
- A Master Plan will be prepared for visitor facilities at the Venus Bay Beaches to provide high-quality day visitor facilities, upgraded carparking and the separation of vehicle and pedestrian access.
- A variety of walking opportunities within the park will be provided, from short

nature trails to extended walks along remote sections of coastline.

- Horse riding will be provided for on the Ocean Beach between Arch Rock and the outfall pipeline.
- Gemstone fossicking will be provided for on a section of the beach between Walkerville South and Cape Liptrap.
- Recreational opportunities will be permitted in accordance with table 2.

#### **Community awareness and involvement**

- The formation of a Friends group, to participate in activities that protect and conserve the parks values, will be encouraged and supported.
- Community awareness and understanding of management programs and the park's unique values will be enhanced.

#### **Other**

- Consents, leases and licences will be developed for occupancies and use of sites within the park in accordance with legislative requirements.

- Park boundary anomalies will be identified and resolved.

**TABLE 2 SUMMARY OF RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES**

ACTIVITY	MANAGEMENT ZONES		OVERLAY
	CONSERVATION ZONE (95% of the Park)	CONSERVATION AND RECREATION ZONE (5% of the Park)	SPECIAL PROTECTION AREA (0.3% of the Park)
Picnicking*	Yes	Yes	Yes
Camping: Bear Gully*	NA	Yes	NA
Camping: land-based, dispersed*	YC	No	No
Walking			
- Short nature walks	Yes	Yes	Yes
- Bushwalks	Yes	Yes	Yes
Scenic viewing	Yes	Yes	Yes
Bicycle riding	YC	YC	No
Horse riding	YC	No	NA
Fishing	Yes	Yes	Yes
Intertidal collecting of Pipis	YC	YC	No
Dogs	YC	YC	YC
Visiting historic features	Yes	NA	Yes
Hang-glider & paragliding	YC	NA	NA
Land yachting	No	No	No
Bird watching	Yes	Yes	Yes
Gemstone fossicking	YC	NA	NA
Commercial tours			
- Coastal walking	Yes	Yes	Yes
- Camping*	Yes	Yes	No
- Sightseeing	Yes	Yes	Yes
- Birdwatching	Yes	Yes	Yes
Rock climbing & abseiling	No	No	No
Boat-launching	No#	No	No#
Orienteering & rogaining	Yes	Yes	Yes

## KEY:

NA Not applicable

YC Conditional: refer to relevant section for details

\* use of solid fuel fires (except in designated fireplaces), chainsaws and generators not permitted in the park

# adjacent to the park.

- Liaison will be maintained with the South Gippsland Shire Council regarding suitable controls and issues relating to development adjoining the park.

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## 4 STRATEGIES FOR CONSERVATION

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### 4.1 Geological and landform features

A wide range of geological age classes, from ancient Cambrian greenstones (570 million years old) to recent sand deposits, occur in the park.

The geology and landform provides ideal educational opportunities because of the wide range of geological age classes and structural features found within a comparatively small area.

Cape Liptrap within the park represents a site of national geological and geomorphological significance, given the outstanding exposure of Lower Palaeozoic rocks at this site. Point Smythe has regional significance as an example of a mobile sand spit, and Arch Rock contains regionally significant rock stacks and small caves in the calcarenite formations.

The Walkerville lime industry ran from 1875 to 1926, and is interesting for its commercial use of the park's limestone, which dates from the Lower Devonian age (400–420 million years old). These limestones carry a diverse fossil fauna. The Waratah fault is exposed in these limestone cliffs at The Bluff, between Walkerville North and South.

Apart from the quarrying of limestone associated with the lime-burning industry at Walkerville and Bell Point, there is little evidence of human impacts on the geological values of the park.

Gemstones (jasper and serpentine) occur in the coves south of Walkerville (section 5.12).

#### Aim

- Manage sites of geological and geomorphological significance to allow public access and interpretation.

#### Management strategies

- *Provide an interpretive display at Cape Liptrap explaining the park's geological features.*

- *Continue upgrading the interpretive display and signage associated with the Walkerville lime-burning industry.*
- *Monitor and address threats to geomorphological values of significant sites.*
- *Encourage scientific study and research into the nature, origin and dynamics of the park's landforms and geological features.*

### 4.2 Rivers and catchments

The park contains a number of small, forested coastal catchments draining from the Hoddle Ridge, which supply water to Waratah Bay Caravan Park and Walkerville North Camping Reserve. Private water supply pipelines currently extract water from Bluff Creek at Walkerville.

Bear Gully Creek, which is sourced from a largely cleared catchment, is used to supply water to the Bear Gully camping area. This water is of uncertain quality and is considered unsuitable for drinking. There are no significant surface catchments in the Venus Bay – Point Smythe area, although numerous domestic bores tap groundwater resources near the park.

#### Aim

- Maintain water quality in the park's catchments.

#### Management strategies

- *Ensure that water extraction by public utilities is managed to minimise impacts on ecological values of the park (section 7.1).*
- *Ensure that park users are made aware that the water supply to Bear Gully campsite is unsuitable for drinking.*
- *Remove all private water supply pipelines from the park (section 7.1).*

### 4.3 Vegetation

The park features a variety of vegetation types, ranging from heaths and forests at Waratah Bay to coastal scrubs on the dunes between

Point Smythe and Morgans Beach. A total of 11 ecological vegetation classes (EVCs) have been identified, encompassing open forest, paperbark scrub, wet heath, dry heath, swamp heath, coastal scrub and grassland.

As a result of past land clearing, the park represents the only significant occurrence of these EVCs on the Tarwin Plains.

About 270 species of vascular plants, including 27 orchids, are recorded for the park. Ten plant species are classified as threatened in Victoria — Coast Bitter-bush, Marsh Saltbush, Slender Caladenia, Bog Gum, Fringed Pennywort, Currant-wood, Heathland Leek-orchid, Top-bog Sedge, Rush Lily and Prawn Greenhood (appendix 1). Four plant species reach the limit of their biogeographical range in or near the park. The heathlands are particularly interesting for their diversity of species and the structure of the heathlands is important to fauna. Both the frequency and intensity of fires influence the composition and structure of these heathlands (section 4.6). Threats to the native vegetation include weed and vermin invasion, uncontrolled recreation uses, especially in exposed coastal sites, and degradation from grazing by domestic stock.

#### Aims

- Manage ecosystems to ensure the protection of indigenous flora species and vegetation communities, particularly significant species and communities.
- Improve knowledge about the conservation of natural values with minimal disturbance to the environment.

#### Management strategies

- *Maintain the ecological condition of the existing diverse and intact forest, heathland and headland communities and improve it by restoring age-class diversity.*
- *Progressively restore the species diversity, structure and age-class diversity of the coastal dune communities.*
- *Develop an ecological fire management plan for the park consistent with operational policies and Interim Guidelines and Procedures for Ecological*

*Burning on Public Land in Victoria (NRE 1999b).*

- *Ensure that poorly fenced sections of the park are protected from grazing by domestic stock.*
- *Restore disturbed areas using indigenous species of local provenance.*

#### 4.4 Fauna

Cape Liptrap Coastal Park provides a diversity of habitats for native fauna. Twenty-nine threatened species, including ten listed as threatened under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act are recorded for the park (appendix 2).

The heaths support a variety of nectar-feeding birds, while the open forests are important for hollow-dependent species such as the threatened Powerful Owl. Seventeen species of waders using Anderson Inlet are covered under the JAMBA and CAMBA international migratory bird agreements. A number of these waders, including Red-necked Stint and Sanderling, have been noted feeding and roosting on the ocean beach between Venus Bay and Point Smythe (Jim Whitelaw pers. obs.)

The Hooded Plover, a nationally vulnerable species listed under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act, lives and breeds on the park's ocean beaches. The Orange-bellied Parrot, a critically endangered species also listed under the Act, has been recently recorded feeding on strand vegetation near Point Smythe.

Threatened mammals include the Swamp Antechinus, a heathland species, and a breeding colony of Common Bent-wing Bats.

Common species of mammals found in the park include the Eastern Grey Kangaroo, Swamp Wallaby, Koala, Common Ringtail Possum, Common Brushtail Possum, Sugar Glider, Eastern Pygmy-possum, Common Wombat, Echidna, Southern Brown Bandicoot, White-footed Dunnart, Agile Antechinus, Swamp Rat and Bush Rat.

The rocky reefs and shore platforms from Arch Rock to Walkerville support a high diversity of fish and intertidal and shallow subtidal invertebrates (ECC 1996). The Venus Bay

Beaches have extensive beds of clamshells. For management of fish and fishing refer to section 5.6.

#### Aims

- Ensure the preservation and protection of indigenous fauna.
- Manage park ecosystems to provide for the long-term protection and preservation of significant communities, habitats and species.
- Improve knowledge about the conservation of fauna and their habitat requirements.

#### Management strategies

- *Implement biological management actions that incorporate relevant results of research for the protection and preservation of fauna, particularly threatened species and their habitats.*
- *Manage fauna listed under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act in accordance with approved Action Statements (appendix 2).*
- *Encourage monitoring of the populations of more common native fauna to ensure their continuing viability.*
- *Investigate the possibility of developing wildlife corridors from the park to link with adjoining reserves and other areas of native vegetation.*
- *Prohibit public access to offshore rock stacks and cliff areas that are used by breeding seabirds and bats.*
- *Continue to prohibit feeding of wildlife by visitors, and educate visitors about this policy.*

#### 4.5 Landscape

The coastal scenery within the park is considered to be outstanding on an international scale.

The park contains a number of significant landscapes:

- The broad sweep of ocean beach at Venus Bay, backed by high dunes.

- The impressive high cliffs and bluffs of Cape Liptrap, together with offshore stacks, platforms and reefs.
- The more intimate enclosed coves of Walkerville, Grinder Point, Bell Point and Bear Gully, including the cultural landscapes of the old limekilns on the beach at Walkerville.
- The spacious view across the water to the prominent peaks of Wilsons Promontory National Park.
- The estuarine landscapes and tidal flats of Anderson Inlet.
- Spectacular coastal views from many vantage points, notably Cape Liptrap, the Walkerville heathlands and Waratah Bay.

Visual intrusions into these natural landscapes include some sections of the Venus Bay and Promontory View estates, the South Gippsland Regional Water Authority outfall pipeline crossing the beach southwest of Venus Bay, signs on bluffs and heathlands, and recent residential development adjacent to the park.

Most of the park and surrounding private land is included in Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO 3) of the South Gippsland Planning Scheme. This overlay aims to protect and enhance the natural beauty (including landscape values) of the coastal area and minimise the risk of impacts from development.

New subdivisions for small rural holdings or residential housing adjacent to the park have the potential to affect landscape values, particularly when they are situated on prominent bluffs, headlands and dunes where they can be easily seen from within the park.

#### Aims

- Minimise the visual intrusions on natural landscape within the park, especially from major viewing points.
- Where possible, remove or shield undesirable visual intrusions.

### Management strategies

- *Ensure that all new developments in the park are planned and designed to minimise their impact on landscape values.*
- *Contribute to the South Gippsland Shire Council's Coastal Strategy, particularly in relation to landscape values.*
- *Maintain and improve existing viewing points in the park at Cape Liptrap and Walkerville North.*
- *Formalise the existing low-key viewing area on the Loop Road above the heathlands of Walkerville.*
- *Liase with the South Gippsland Shire Council in relation to environmental significance overlays in the planning scheme and planning applications for developments that may affect landscape values of the park.*

### 4.6 Fire management

There are three major vegetation groupings in the park, and each one presents a different challenge for fire management.

The coastal dune scrub and grasses of the park's western section carry low fuel loads but are highly flammable. Fires tend to move quickly and cannot be directly controlled. The park abuts house lots in the Venus Bay subdivision, so quick response, good access and slashed fuel-reduction breaks are essential components of fire protection. Post-fire vegetation recovery is usually rapid, but rehabilitation may be necessary to prevent wind erosion of sand dune systems. There is no rationale for fuel-reduction burning in this vegetation type.

The heaths within the park north of Walkerville also carry low fuel loads but are highly flammable. There are sound ecological reasons for the use of fires within this vegetation type. Both the frequency and intensity of fires influence the composition and structure of these heathlands. Heaths generally require fire once every 10 to 15 years to retain floristic structure and meet the habitat needs of associated fauna (CNR 1995b).

The open forest and paperbark scrub vegetation types present a greater fire hazard

due to higher amounts of fuel. Fire management is required to reduce the surface and bark fuel hazard. The use of fire for habitat management is also a consideration, but the ecologically desirable fire frequency for this type of vegetation is much longer, probably 15 to 25 years, or up to 40 years in damp gullies.

Under the provisions of the *Forests Act 1958* (Vic.), it is the duty of the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) to carry out proper and sufficient work for the prevention and suppression of fire on all protected public land. The National Parks Act requires the Secretary to the Department of Sustainability and Environment to ensure that sufficient measures are taken to protect parks from injury by fire.

Under the Code of Practice for Fire Management on Public Land (CNR 1995a), fire management activities must ensure that environmental values, including the vigour and diversity of the indigenous flora, are protected as far as possible from the deleterious effects of wildfire and fire regimes.

The Gippsland Fire Protection Plan (NRE 1999a) defines fire protection objectives, strategies and practices to be adopted in the management of wildfires and prescribed burning.

Four Fuel Management Zones apply to the Cape Liptrap Coastal Park. Zone 2 provides corridors of sufficient width and continuity to achieve a substantial barrier to the spread of wildfire. Zone 3 areas provide an irregular mosaic of areas of fuel reduction, decreasing the severity of wildfires. Zone 4 areas are managed specifically for flora and fauna or vegetation communities that have critical fire regime requirements. The majority of the park is included in this zone. Zone 5 areas provide for the exclusion of prescribed burning from areas where there would be potential for economic, ecological or cultural loss.

Under the Gippsland Fire Protection Plan, areas of Zones 2 and 3 will be burnt during the life of this plan.

#### Aims

- Protect life, property and park values from damage by fire.

- Suppress wildfires in a manner appropriate to seasonal conditions, with the objective of minimising impacts on park values.
- Sustain the vigour, diversity and successional development of the park's plant and animal communities by ecological burning on the basis of current and future knowledge.

### Management strategies

- *Develop an ecological fire management plan for the park consistent with operational policies and Interim Guidelines and Procedures for Ecological Burning on Public Land in Victoria (NRE 1999b) and relevant biological research.*
- *Encourage research into the use of fire for ecological purposes and the effects of different fire regimes on the park's vegetation communities and associated fauna.*
- *Update fire plans as necessary to reflect research findings.*
- *Work with DSE, the CFA, the Municipal Fire Prevention Committee and local landholders to develop appropriate fire protection plans for the Walkerville township and Venus Bay settlement.*
- *Prepare and implement rehabilitation plans as appropriate after fire suppression activities.*

### 4.7 Pest plants and animals

The control of introduced plants and animals in the park is a significant issue, given the high ratio of park boundary to park area and the largely cleared or semi-urban nature of most sections of freehold land adjoining the park.

Introduced fauna known to occur within the park include the European Rabbit, Red Fox, Feral Cat, Black Rat, Brown Rat, House Mouse, Hog Deer and Fallow Deer (section 4.4), Common Blackbird, House Sparrow, Common Mynah, Common Starling, Spotted Turtle-dove, European Wasp and European Honey Bee.

Predation by the Red Fox is listed as a potentially threatening process under schedule 3 of the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act.

Foxes pose a significant threat to small mammals such as the threatened Swamp Antechinus, and to shorebirds and waders roosting and feeding on the beach. A fox-baiting program is undertaken annually in co-operation with local farmers.

Domestic pets and dogs off leads also pose a threat to small native mammals and birds. Ground-nesting shorebirds such as Hooded Plovers are at risk in areas where people exercise dogs on the beach.

In past years, grazing by wandering cattle occurred in some sections of the park, especially the western section, but fencing improvements have since reduced this problem (section 4.3).

Rabbits are present throughout the park but generally not in large numbers.

Fallow Deer, initially escapees from nearby deer-farming operations in the late 1990s, are now breeding in the park, and the population is increasing. Hog Deer also occur in small numbers throughout the park. These introduced species are 'protected wildlife' under the provisions of the *Wildlife Act 1975* (Vic.), but they are not indigenous and their presence is incompatible with management principles. The deer species could affect vegetation values in the long-term if populations are allowed to increase. The National Parks Act prohibits hunting in the park.

Colonies of feral European Honey Bees and European Wasps pose a threat to the safety of visitors and may have an adverse impact on the ecology of the park.

African Boxthorn is a significant problem near Anderson Inlet, the Five Mile Track, and the area adjacent to the Venus Bay subdivisions.

Infestations of a number of highly invasive environmental weeds occur in and around Walkerville. These species are largely garden escapees such as Cape Ivy, Arum Lily, Dolichos Pea, English Ivy, Watsonia, Agapanthus and Blue Periwinkle. Environmental weeds such as these will have a very high priority in the weed control program.

Sea Spurge is a particularly invasive weed on coastal dunes. Research work on herbicide control of Sea Spurge in the park has begun.

The introduced grass *Spartina* occurs in the intertidal areas along the southern shoreline of Anderson Inlet at Point Smythe. *Spartina* invasion is listed as a potentially threatening process under schedule 3 of the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act, and the species is also declared as a noxious aquatic species under the Fisheries Act. *Spartina* is known to seriously degrade habitat for waterbirds, particularly shorebirds, by occupying and rendering unsuitable both feeding and roosting areas (Lane 1992).

Control methods that have a minimal impact on park values will be used in the control of pest species. Priority will be given to controlling pest species that are invasive or pose significant threats to native flora and fauna.

#### **Aims**

- Eradicate or control pest plant and animal species using methods that minimise disturbance to natural systems and park values.
- Restore native vegetation to areas where weeds have been removed.

#### **Management strategies**

- *Prepare and implement an integrated program of monitoring and control of pest plant and animal species and pathogens. Priority will be give to:*
  - *areas of high conservation significance;*
  - *the control of African Boxthorn, Spartina, Blackberry, Dolichos Pea, Cape Ivy and other significant environmental weeds;*
  - *the control of new plant infestations;*
  - *pest plants with a high potential for invasion;*
  - *the eradication of new pest animal populations as they are identified;*
  - *the control of foxes.*

- *Continue and, if possible, expand the fox-baiting program within the park, particularly to protect threatened fauna, migratory species and beach habitat.*
- *Monitor the impact of Hog Deer in the park. Implement appropriate control strategies where detrimental impacts have been identified.*
- *Remove Fallow Deer from the park as far as practicable to prevent the population becoming firmly established.*
- *Continue and encourage research into the control of Sea Spurge. Implement control programs in the park where appropriate.*
- *Destroy colonies of feral European Honey Bees and European Wasps where they become established.*
- *Introduce the concepts and actions of the 'Creeping Backyard' program to adjoining landowners in settlements near the park.*
- *Rehabilitate areas of vegetation disturbed by control actions to minimise re-invasion by pest species.*
- *Inform park visitors and adjacent landholders about relevant pest plant and animal control programs.*
- *Liaise and co-ordinate pest plant control programs at Walkerville with the Foreshore Committee of Management.*
- *Promote the responsible management (especially night-time management) of pets to local communities.*

#### **4.8 Soil conservation**

There are very few areas of soil degradation in the park apart from the quarried cliff areas associated with the limeburning industry at Walkerville.

There is isolated erosion along road and track edges, in the Bear Gully camping area, at Cape Liptrap and on some sections of unformed coastal walking tracks. Most soil erosion is part of the natural coastal process, especially the slumping or erosion of the park's cliff sections.

Coastal dunes between Arch Rock and Venus Bay were grazed by stock (mainly cattle) until

the late 1960s. This caused significant damage to the dune vegetation and generated dune blowouts that are still evident today. Although mostly regenerating and stabilising naturally, these areas will need to be monitored.

Erosion control and drainage works have been undertaken at the Cape Liptrap lighthouse to repair the eroded precincts and provide public access.

The beach access tracks at Venus Bay No. 1 to No. 5 carparks require ongoing maintenance to prevent soil erosion, but basic erosion control structures such as fencing and steps are already in place.

Point Smythe is an eroding shoreline; its area has been reduced by about 40 ha since 1911 (DCLS 1978).

A number of unauthorised vehicle and pedestrian access tracks exist within the park, particularly at Grinder Point, Morgans Beach, Ten Mile Creek and Venus Bay (section 5.2). These tracks are poorly sited and are leading to significant soil erosion.

#### Aims

- Prevent and control soil degradation caused by visitor and management activities.
- Rehabilitate sites where unnatural soil degradation has occurred.
- Protect important economic, cultural and natural assets from soil erosion.

#### Management strategies

- *Close and revegetate all unauthorised access tracks or coastal paths (section 5.2).*
- *Manage public access to beaches to prevent degradation of sand dunes and rehabilitate sites where degradation has occurred. Priority will be given to the unstable cliffs or areas where human impacts are most severe.*
- *Monitor soil erosion and rehabilitation works to determine the success of control measures.*

- *Design and manage visitor areas, access roads and tracks to prevent or reduce soil erosion.*

#### 4.9 Aboriginal cultural heritage

The park lies within the western-most lands of the Gunai – Kurnai Nation, which extended into East Gippsland. The Tarwin Aboriginals, a clan of the Boonerwung, were the makers of high quality stone implements for their tribes. Both the Gunai – Kurnai and the Boonerwung have strong spiritual connections to Wilsons Promontory, otherwise known as Yirak (Gunai – Kurnai) and Wamoon (Boonerwung).

There are numerous sites, mostly along the coastline, which are of significance to the local Aboriginal community and traditional owners. These include occupation sites at Morgan Creek, near Point Smythe, at Ten Mile Creek, Five Mile Creek and near Bell Point. The most common archaeological sites within the park are shell middens and stone artefact scatters.

Degradation by erosion, illegal vehicle traffic and pillaging of artefacts are major threats to the integrity of cultural sites. Some sites require active management to ensure protection. There has been no recent survey work on sites within the park, and it is likely that additional sites may be found.

Approaches to the protection of such sites and the involvement of local Aboriginal communities in their management are outlined in the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984* (Cwlth) and the *Aboriginal and Archaeological Relics Preservation Act 1972* (Vic.). The cultural heritage responsibilities in relation to Cape Liptrap, in accordance with Part 11A of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act, lie with the Aboriginal community of the Central Gippsland Aboriginal Health and Housing Co-operative in Morwell.

Issues relating to native title are dealt with according to the Native Title Act. An application for a native title determination, which covers Cape Liptrap Coastal Park, among other areas, was registered with the Native Title Tribunal on the 17 March 1997. Implementation of this Management Plan will

take into account the existence of this and any subsequent native title applications.

#### **Aims**

- Preserve and protect features of Aboriginal cultural and archaeological significance.
- Provide opportunities for people to learn about and understand the park's Aboriginal cultural values.

#### **Management strategies**

- *Manage and protect Aboriginal cultural sites and places in accordance with the provisions of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act and the Archaeological and Aboriginal Relics Preservation Act.*
- *Liaise with the Gippsland Cultural Heritage Unit, Central Gippsland Aboriginal Health and Housing Co-operative, Aboriginal Affairs Victoria and the native title claimants over the protection of the park's archaeological heritage.*
- *Formalise a process of consultation with the Aboriginal community and traditional owners, including those nominated in relevant legislation, on traditional use and the Aboriginal significance of features in the park.*
- *Permit Aboriginal traditional activities in the park according to Parks Victoria operational policies.*
- *Liaise with Aboriginal Affairs Victoria and co-operate with the Aboriginal community and traditional owners in the identification, management and care of sites of significance.*
- *Ensure that all management actions are in accordance with the Native Title Act.*
- *Increase visitors' awareness and understanding of the Aboriginal cultural and spiritual significance of the park through appropriate signage developed in consultation with the Aboriginal community.*

#### **4.10 Post-settlement cultural heritage**

The first recorded European sighting of this coast was by George Bass in 1798 on his voyage to prove the existence of a strait between the mainland and Tasmania. Heavy seas forced him to beach his whaleboat for three days at Cape Liptrap (Collett 1994).

Sealers and whalers later worked along this coast, exterminating two seal populations in these waters within 30 years. Graziers followed overland, and by 1851 a number of major grazing runs had been taken up.

Limestone was discovered in 1875, and six kilns were soon established in the cliffs at Walkerville. A small settlement sprang up around the kilns, and by 1887 over 70 men were employed (Charles and Loney 1989). Another kiln and jetty were established at nearby Bell Point. The limekilns remained in operation until 1926, when rising transport costs and the displacement of lime by cement in the building industry made the kilns unprofitable. Relics of the limeburning industry remaining in the park include the kiln ruins, piles of the jetty, and the formation of tramways once used for hauling limestone and timber to the kilns. A small cemetery near Walkerville contains graves from that early era. A Heritage Action Plan is currently being prepared for the relics associated with the Walkerville lime-burning industry (Parks Victoria in prep.).

The rough and treacherous seas around Cape Liptrap have claimed a number of ships, including the *Duke of Wellington* (1853), *Cremona* (1853), *Greyhound* (1855), *Nautilus* (1856), *Amazon* (1863), *Bertha* (1870), *Four Winds* (1923) and *Ada Burgess* (1934) (Loney 1980). The remains of the wreck of the steel barque *Magnat*, which ran aground in 1900, can be seen at low tide on the Venus Bay Beach.

A lighthouse was established at Cape Liptrap in 1913 to improve the safety of coastal shipping. In 1951 the steel tower was dismantled and replaced with the current structure. The lighthouse was the first fully unattended light built and financed by the Commonwealth government.

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Historic and cultural features will be managed in accordance with the Australia ICOMOS Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance (Burra Charter) (ICOMOS 1988) and within the provisions of the *Heritage Act 1995* (Vic.).

**Aims**

- Preserve and protect features of cultural, archaeological and historical significance.
- Provide opportunities for people to learn about and understand the park's historic and cultural values.

**Management strategies**

- *Protect, preserve, interpret and manage features and sites of cultural or historical significance in accordance with the principles outlined in the Burra Charter (ICOMOS 1988) and the provisions of the Heritage Act.*

- *Collect and record information relating to sites of cultural and historical significance. Continue to provide interpretive materials that improve visitors' appreciation of the park's cultural and historic aspects.*
- *Maintain the historic cemetery at Walkerville and provide interpretive material.*
- *Manage and protect the limekilns and associated relics at Walkerville in accordance with the Heritage Action Plan.*
- *Liaise with Heritage Victoria to identify and assess historical sites and prepare a plan for the management of all significant cultural and historical sites within the park.*

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## 5 STRATEGIES FOR VISITORS

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### 5.1 Information, interpretation and education

The provision of information, interpretive services and environmental education can help orientate visitors, enhance their visit, foster an understanding and appreciation of the park's features and values, encourage appropriate visitor use, reduce potential management problems and contribute to a broader understanding of natural environments and management objectives.

Cape Liptrap Coastal Park offers opportunities to develop themes related to the park's complex geological sequences, its flora and fauna, and Aboriginal and post-settlement cultural heritage.

Little information is currently made available within the park. Park Notes developed for the Cape Liptrap Coastal Park and the Walkerville limekilns are available from Parks Victoria offices, accredited information centres, and caravan parks at Venus Bay, Walkerville North and Waratah Bay. Information shelters and interpretive signs at key features would assist visitors' appreciation and understanding of park values.

Rangers organise interpretive activities for community and school groups on request. In addition, guided interpretive walks and rockpool rambles are offered by the Coast Action program during summer.

The historic limekilns at Walkerville South and the lighthouse at Cape Liptrap are promoted as part of the Phillip Island and Gippsland Discovery Heritage Trail. Interpretation of these significant cultural features will be improved through the provision of information shelters and orientation signs.

The park complements other tourist destinations in the area. Improved promotion of the park in conjunction with local attractions could increase visitation and help support the tourism industry in South Gippsland.

#### Aims

- Encourage visitors' discovery, enjoyment and appreciation of the park's natural and cultural values.
- Orientate visitors in relation to park features.
- Inform visitors of appropriate behaviour during their park visit.
- Provide high-quality interpretive and educational opportunities to promote an understanding and appreciation of the park's values.

#### Management strategies

- *Develop and maintain information shelters at key visitor destinations within the park, including Walkerville South, Venus Bay beaches, Point Smythe and Bear Gully.*
- *Provide adequate visitor orientation, information and safety messages at key visitor sites.*
- *Continue to distribute Park Notes from park offices, accredited information centres and other appropriate local outlets.*
- *Provide signs at the Walkerville limekilns and cemetery to interpret the cultural values, management and history of these features.*
- *Provide signs at Cape Liptrap to interpret the cultural and geological values of this site.*
- *Where appropriate and in consultation with the Aboriginal community, provide visitor information and interpretation material on the park's Aboriginal heritage.*
- *Organise interpretive activities for community and school groups on request.*
- *Regularly evaluate information and interpretive programs related to the park.*

- *Liaise with State and regional tourism authorities to ensure that the park is appropriately promoted in regional visitor information centres and in regional tourism guides.*

## 5.2 Access

The management of roads and tracks is summarised in table 3.

The park has very good vehicle access from several towns on the South Gippsland Highway and from the Bass Highway at Inverloch. Due to the linear nature of the park, the length of roads within the Park is relatively short, and most roads to the park are maintained by South Gippsland Shire Council or VicRoads.

The Venus Bay Beaches are among the most important visitor destinations within South Gippsland, attracting over 200 000 day visits a year. There are five access points to the ocean beach, most of which are inappropriately sited. Residents and visitors use these access roads and carparks heavily, particularly over the summer period. Although current carparking is inadequate to cope with peak demand, environmental constraints at the sites significantly limit the ability to expand parking capacity. Most facilities provided at these sites are in poor condition, and current usage is having an adverse impact on the environmental values of the park. Carparking is generally limited and parking spaces are poorly defined, leading to congestion and conflicts with pedestrians.

The establishment of pedestrian pathways and other facilities, including tables, seating, viewing areas and information shelters would significantly enhance the visitor experience.

The road to No. 4 Beach is more than 500 metres long and is inappropriately situated on the foredune. Carparking is available for only 10 vehicles. The future of this site will be reviewed through the master planning process for the Venus Bay Beaches.

Access roads to Venus Bay Beaches No 1, 2 and 3, although surrounded by the park, were not included when the park was declared, and are currently the responsibility of the South Gippsland Shire Council.

The Five Mile Track is a 4WD track along a road reserve managed by the South Gippsland Shire Council that provides access to a relatively remote section of the ocean beach in the park. Only the last 350 metres of the track is within the park. The track is rarely maintained and is in poor condition. There is a small informal camping area behind the dunes. Vehicles driven onto the beach from this access point are a consistent problem, causing damage to the dune and a midden. Driving vehicles on beaches within Victoria is prohibited under the provisions of the *Land Conservation (Vehicle Control) Act 1972* (Vic.).

A number of tracks in the park near Waratah Bay and Walkerville that were constructed for fire protection purposes are used for bush walking and cycling (sections 5.7 and 5.9). Gates and fencing have been constructed at some locations throughout the park to regulate track use.

A number of unauthorised vehicle and pedestrian access tracks have been constructed into the park from neighbouring properties. Access across freehold land into the park is a significant public liability risk. Landowners may not be aware of this risk.

### Aim

- Maintain roads and tracks to standards consistent with management aims.

### Management strategies

- *Upgrade carparking at the Venus Bay Beaches with improved layout and defined parking spaces, including the separation of vehicle and pedestrian access.*
- *Liaise with South Gippsland Shire Council to maintain the Five Mile Track to 4WD standard only.*
- *Close the track crossing the dune at the end of the Five Mile Track to vehicles. Establish an alternative access track to the beach for horse riders and walkers.*
- *Retain the tracks in the Waratah and Walkerville sections of the park for management vehicles, cyclists and walkers.*

- *Establish a carpark for bushwalkers who use the firebreaks and walking tracks at Waratah Bay.*
- *Liase with the South Gippsland Shire Council regarding access to the park at Morgans Beach from road reserves.*
- *Close vehicular access to the track between Bear Gully camping area and the Maitland Beach boat launching area, and reconstruct it as a walking track (section 5.5).*
- *Liase with South Gippsland Shire Council to ensure that there is a co-operative approach to road maintenance and the retention of roadside vegetation.*
- *Liase with VicRoads and the South Gippsland Shire Council to improve directional signage to the park from nearby major towns and touring routes.*
- *Evaluate the future of Venus Bay No. 4 Beach Track as part of the development of the master plan for Venus Bay Beaches.*
- *Liase with adjoining landowners regarding unauthorised access tracks to the park's beaches.*
- *Liase with the South Gippsland Shire Council to seek inclusion of all the Venus Bay Beach access roads within the park.*
- *Close and revegetate all unauthorised access tracks or coastal paths.*

### **5.3 Day visits**

Day visitors represent the majority of visitors to the park, so providing facilities for this group is a high priority. Day visitors mainly use the beach areas at Venus Bay, Walkerville and Waratah Bay, and to a lesser extent Bear Gully. These areas provide opportunities for swimming, fishing, surfing and walking.

Current visitation rates place considerable pressure on facilities, particularly during the summer holidays and long weekends. Many of the facilities provided within the park are in poor condition and require upgrading to meet the needs and expectations of visitors.

Five carparks and pedestrian walkways provide access to the ocean beach at Venus Bay. Visitor facilities have been constructed

in an ad hoc manner, are inappropriately sited on the primary dune system, and are generally in poor condition. Upgrading access and visitor facilities at these sites including new tables, seating, beach viewing areas and park information would significantly enhance the visitor experience. Completion of these extensive upgrades is dependent on the availability of capital works funding.

Cape Liptrap lighthouse is a popular tourist destination, promoted as part of the Phillip Island and Gippsland Discovery Heritage Trail touring route. The lighthouse provides outstanding scenic views of Wilsons Promontory and the surrounding coastline.

The locations of existing and proposed facilities for visitors are summarised in figure 3 and table 4.

#### **Aims**

- Establish and maintain day visitor facilities that enhance visitor enjoyment of the park and are consistent with protecting park values.
- Improve visitor facilities and raise the profile of the park as a day visitor destination.

#### **Management strategies**

- *Prepare a master plan for upgrading visitor facilities at the Venus Bay Beaches including:*
  - *separation of pedestrian and vehicle access to reduce congestion and improve visitor safety;*
  - *upgraded carparking with improved layout, traffic-calming devices and defined parking spaces;*
  - *an increased range of visitor facilities, including tables, seating, viewing areas and information shelters;*
  - *pedestrian pathways linking visitor facilities, carparking and neighbouring residential areas;*
  - *improved visual amenity through fencing, replanting and landscaping of disturbed areas.*

**TABLE 3 MANAGEMENT OF ROADS AND TRACKS**

ROAD	CLASS CURRENT/ PROPOSED	COMMENT/USES	MANAGEMENT ACTION RATIONALE
Venus Bay No. 1 Beach	4,A,O / 4,A,O	Managed by the South Gippsland Shire Council. Provides access to Venus Bay Beach and surf lifesaving club.	Upgrade and reseal road. Improve carparking. Seek to have road included in the park.
Venus Bay No. 2 Beach	5,C,O / 5,C,O	Managed by the South Gippsland Shire Council. Provides access to Venus Bay Beach.	Managed by the South Gippsland Shire. Upgrade road and improve carparking. Seek to have road included in the park.
Venus Bay No. 3 Beach	5,C,O / 5,C,O	Managed by the South Gippsland Shire Council. Provides access to Venus Bay Beach.	Managed by the South Gippsland Shire. Upgrade road and improve carparking. Seek to have road included in the park.
Venus Bay No. 4 Beach	5,D,O / #	Managed by Parks Victoria. Provides access to Venus Bay Beach.	—
Venus Bay No. 5 Beach	5,C,O / 5,C,O	Managed by Parks Victoria. Provides access to Venus Bay Beach.	Upgrade road and improve carparking.
Walkerville Road *	4,A,O / 4,A,O	Provides access to residential areas and the Foreshore Reserve at Walkerville North.	Seek to have road excluded from the park.
Cape Liptrap Road	4,B,O / 4,B,O	Managed by the South Gippsland Shire Council. Provides access to Cape Liptrap lighthouse and views areas.	Relocate and improve carparking facilities.
Five Mile Track	5,E,O / 5,E,O	Managed by the South Gippsland Shire Council. Provides 4WD access to beach.	Close section of track across dune. Establish alternative access to beach for horse riders and walkers.
Bear Gully Track	5,B,O / 5,B,O	Provides access to campsites within the Bear Gully Camping Area.	Improve drainage. Formalise track and turning circle with camping area.
Maitland Beach Track	5,E,O / Closed	Provides access for launching boats from Maitland Beach.	Close and replace with walking track to beach and neighbouring headland.

## Strategies for visitors

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- \* Section of Walkerville Road between Promontory View Estate and Walkerville North.
- # Future of road to be determined during development of a master plan for Venus Bay Beaches.

### Class

#### Function:

- 4 Provide for park access, and additional functions such as commercial uses, through access to other location (outside the park), or access to private property or utilities.
- 5 Exclusively provide access for visitors into parks for recreational activities, or exclusive use for park management.

#### Development:

- A Primary Road — all weather, two laned, mainly sealed road
- B Secondary Road — all weather, two laned formed and gravelled, or single lane sealed with gravel shoulders
- C Minor Road — single lane unsealed, formed road usually lightly gravelled
- D Access Track — single lane, dry weather formed (from natural materials)
- E Rough Track — single lane, unformed earth track at or near the natural surface

#### Status:

- O Open to public vehicles.
- Closed Closed to all vehicles

- *Provide day visitor facilities at Cape Liptrap lighthouse, including viewing areas, seating and interpretation of park features.*
- *Establish a day visitor area with picnic facilities and carparking at Bear Gully.*
- *Provide information boards and signage to direct visitors to facilities and park features.*

#### 5.4 Camping

Situated approximately five kilometres from Walkerville, Bear Gully provides for bush camping in a scenic coastal setting. The water supply has been upgraded recently and a toilet block with disabled access has been built. Otherwise there are few facilities, and campsites are not defined. A revegetation program is being undertaken, and areas of native vegetation have been fenced to prevent damage. A risk audit of the park resulted in extensive pruning of banksias damaged by campers, and the removal of unsafe trees (Parks Victoria 1998b).

Numerous fire scars are evident from campfires. Although campers are required to bring their own firewood, removal of fallen and standing timber is still occurring within the park, on roadsides and on private property neighbouring Bear Gully. Firewood collection can have a significant impact through the destruction of habitat for small ground-dwelling animals. Campfires pose a significant fire risk during the summer period, particularly because of the highly flammable coastal scrub that is present within the camping area.

The camping area receives heavy use in holiday periods, averaging over 200 campers each night from December to February (J. McBride pers. obs.). Annually, Bear Gully receives in excess of 16 000 camper nights. Campsites are currently not defined and during holiday periods pressure is placed on the surrounding remnant vegetation. Conflicts with other users occur during these periods because of the lack of defined boundaries between campsites, access tracks and car parking. Designating camping sites would alleviate current overcrowding, impacts on remnant vegetation, and conflicts with day

visitors. A campers' self-registration system will be considered to avoid overcrowding and reduce environmental impacts on the site.

Parks Victoria's volunteer Camp Host program has provided additional supervision at Bear Gully during the summer holiday period. The Camp Host plays a valuable caretaking role in assisting visitors in the camping area and by providing visitor orientation and park information.

Camping also occurs at the end of the Five Mile Track, where there are no facilities. This site is used by visitors fishing and surfing at the neighbouring beach, and by self-sufficient bushwalkers.

High levels of camping in areas which are not serviced or maintained can have deleterious effects on the environment, and create a risk for campers in those areas in relation to fire, risk mitigation and search and rescue operations. Low levels of dispersed camping currently occur in the more remote sections of the park, generally associated with bushwalking along the coast.

#### Aim

- Provide opportunities for a range of camping experiences while minimising impacts on park values.

#### Management strategies

- *Maintain the informal Bear Gully camping area with minor improvements, including:*
  - *the introduction of designated campsites;*
  - *replanting and protection of remnant vegetation;*
  - *the introduction of a self-registration permit system;*
  - *Camp Host supervision during holiday periods;*
  - *the establishment of a day visitor area with picnic facilities.*
- *Provide designated fireplaces at selected sites at Bear Gully and enforce prohibition of firewood collection.*
- *Establish a new camping area on the Five Mile Track.*

**TABLE 4 EXISTING AND PROPOSED VISITOR FACILITIES**

SITE	TOILETS	PICNIC TABLES	FIRE PLACES	WATER SUPPLY	PARK INFO.	WALK TRACK	LOOKOUT	CAMPING	CAR PARKS
Point Smythe*	N	N	N	N	E	U	N	N	E
Venus Bay No. 5 Beach**	U	P	N	N	P	U	N	N	U
Venus Bay No. 4 Beach*	N	N	N	N	N	U	N	N	R
Venus Bay No. 3 Beach**	N	N	N	N	P	U	N	N	U
Venus Bay No. 2 Beach**	N	N	N	N	P	U	N	N	U
Venus Bay No. 1 Beach***	E	U	N	N	P	U	N	N	U
Five Mile Track*	N	P	N	N	P	E	N	U	U
Cape Liptrap**	N	P	N	N	P	P	E	N	U
Bear Gully**	U	E	P	E	P	P	N	U	U
Limekilns**	N	N	N	N	P	E	N	N	N/A
Walkerville North**	N	E	N	N	P	E*	E	N	N/A
Waratah Bay**	N	N	N	N	P	E*	N	N	P

## Key

- \*\*\* Existing and proposed service level = High – high level of visitor facilities and amenities provided
- \*\* Existing and proposed service level = Mid – moderate level of visitor facilities and amenities provided
- \* Existing and proposed service level = Basic – limited visitor facilities and amenities provided
- E existing facility
- N no facility
- P proposed facility
- R facility to be removed
- U upgrade facility
- N/A not applicable

- *Investigate the need for additional walk-in camping areas as part of any overnight coastal walk developed within the park.*
- *Permit walk-in dispersed camping within the Conservation zone of the park, except within 100 metres of sealed roads, within visitor and picnic areas or 500 metres of Cape Liptrap Lighthouse.*

## 5.5 Boating

Boats may be launched from the beach at Walkerville North and Walkerville South. The Walkerville South site is outside the park on public land managed by the Walkerville Foreshore Committee of Management. The Walkerville North site is partly within the park. There are also boat-launching facilities

adjacent to the park at Waratah Bay, Tarwin Lower and Anderson Inlet.

The Walkerville Foreshore Reserve Management Plan (NRE 2001) examined the issue of appropriate arrangements for boat launching at Walkerville. During the development of this plan, the Walkerville Foreshore Committee of Management undertook a major public consultation process and concluded that the construction of an all-tide boat ramp should not proceed. It was recognised that some form of modest upgrade to boat-launching and retrieval facilities at Walkerville North would be beneficial. However, such improvements will be limited to enhanced access from the roadway to the beach, trailer parking, and possibly removal of rocks on the beach launching area.

The launching ramp at Walkerville South serves as a supplementary facility to that at Walkerville North.

An informal launching area on Maitland Beach exists at the end of a rough unsurfaced track near Bear Gully. The site is only suitable for launching small craft. The seas are often rough and unpredictable along this exposed coastline, making conditions hazardous for small craft. Vehicles are currently parking on the fragile foredune of the beach.

#### Aim

- Support the Walkerville Foreshore Committee of Management in providing basic boat launching facilities at Walkerville North.

#### Management strategies

- *Liaise with the Walkerville Foreshore Committee of Management over minor improvements to the boat launching area at Walkerville North.*
- *Provide information in park literature on boat-launching sites close to the park. Include messages on boating and water safety.*
- *Liaise with the Walkerville Foreshore Committee of Management to formalise and resurface the car park and access road at Walkerville South and provide suitable signs.*
- *Close the informal Maitland Beach boat launching area at Bear Gully.*

### 5.6 Fishing

Rock, beach and estuary fishing are popular activities within the park.

Fishing (including shellfish collecting) is managed in accordance with the *Fisheries Act 1995* (Vic.) and Fisheries Regulations.

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

Anglers fish from the rock platforms and beaches at Walkerville, Bear Gully and Waratah Bay, while Venus Bay Beaches are

popular for beach fishing. Common catches include whiting, snapper, sweep, leatherjacket, salmon, Yellowtail Kingfish and trumpeter.

The estuarine waters of Anderson Inlet offer bass, flathead, salmon, whiting, mullet, trevally and garfish.

A Mollusc No Take Zone (formerly known as a shellfish protection zone) applies to the section of the park between Point Smythe and Arch Rock. All molluscs within the intertidal zone, except for Pipis, squid, cuttlefish, octopus and squirts are protected.

Extensive beds of clamshells (Pipis) occur at the Venus Bay Beaches. These clams are popular for eating and as fishing bait. A combined bag and possession limit of 5 litres per person and a maximum of 15 litres per vehicle containing three or more people apply to the collection of Pipis.

Abalone and Rock Lobster fishing occurs on the rocky reefs offshore.

#### Aim

- Provide opportunities for recreational fishing while minimising the impacts on park values.

#### Management strategies

- *Manage fishing in accordance with the Fisheries Act and regulations. Raise public awareness of provisions regarding the collection of bait, bag limits, seasons and licence requirements. Enforce regulations as necessary.*
- *Support Fisheries Victoria programs to monitor and manage fish populations and fishing activities in a sustainable manner in waters within and adjacent to the park.*
- *Liaise with Fisheries Victoria to take appropriate action to ensure sustainability of fish populations and fishing activities.*

### 5.7 Bushwalking

The park provides a diverse range of walking opportunities, from short nature trails to extended walks along remote sections of coastline. The grade and condition of existing and proposed walking tracks is given in table 5.



**TABLE 5 MANAGEMENT OF WALKING TRACKS**

TRACK	LENGTH (KMS)	CLASS CURRENT	CLASS PROPOSED	MANAGEMENT ACTIONS/COMMENTS
Point Smythe Walk	5.0	4	4	Improve signposting. Provide interpretation material in Park Notes.
Anderson Inlet Walk	2.0	4	4	Provide additional signposting.
Lime Burners Walk	0.8	3	3	Works needed regarding gradient, stabilisation, falling rocks and coastal erosion. Provide interpretation signs on cultural features.
Overlook Track	1.2	3	3	Provide additional signposting.
Venus Bay No. 1 Beach Access Track	0.5	2	2	Pedestrian walking track from carpark to beach. Upgrade as part of redevelopment of carpark and road.
Venus Bay No. 2 Beach Access Track	0.3	4	3	Pedestrian walking track from carpark to beach. Upgrade track and provide beach viewing area.
Venus Bay No. 3 Beach Access Track	0.2	4	3	Pedestrian walking track from carpark to beach. Upgrade track as part of the redevelopment of the carpark.
Venus Bay No. 4 Beach Access Track	-	4	3	Evaluate route as part of the master plan for Venus Bay Beaches.
Venus Bay No. 5 Beach Access Track	0.1	4	3	Pedestrian walking track from carpark to beach. Replace/upgrade staircase to beach.
Heath Track No. 1*	-	4	4	Fire protection track, also used for bush walking and cycling.
Heath Track No. 2*	-	4	4	Fire protection track, also used for bush walking and cycling.
Coastal Views Track*	-	4	4	Fire protection track, also used for bush walking and cycling.
Waratah Bay Track*	-	4	4	Fire protection track, also used for bush walking and cycling.
Walkerville Heathlands Track*	-	4	4	Fire protection track, also used for bush walking and cycling.
Waratah – Thompsons Road Walking Track	-	4	4	Proposed new walking track linking Thompsons Road to Waratah Bay. Utilise existing fire protection tracks in route where possible.

\* Walking tracks that also provide management vehicle access.

Australian Standards classification for walking tracks (AS 2156):

Grade 1 Large number of visitors with high level of interpretation facilities.

Grade 2 Opportunity for a large number of visitors to walk easily in a natural environment with a moderate level of interpretation and facilities.

Grade 3 Opportunity to walk in relatively undisturbed natural environments, requiring moderate levels of fitness and care. Low levels of interpretation and facilities.

Grade 4 Opportunity for visitors to explore and discover natural environments along distinct tracks with minimal if any facilities.

Grade 5 Opportunity for those with advanced outdoor knowledge and skills to find their own way along often-indistinct trails to more remote locations.

Grade 6 Opportunity for highly experienced walkers to explore remote and potentially hazardous natural areas without reliance on managed tracks.

Pedestrian walking tracks provide access from the neighbouring Venus Bay estates and carparks to the ocean beach. A series of firebreaks at Walkerville and Waratah Bay provide opportunities for walkers to explore the heathlands and woodlands within this area.

The existing nature trail at Point Smythe and the Anderson Inlet walk need redevelopment. An additional walking track linking Thompsons Road and the firebreaks at Waratah Bay would increase the walking opportunities within this section of the park.

Recently installed signs on the Lime Burners Walk between Walkerville North and Walkerville South provide interpretation on the cultural features of this area.

Walking is possible along most of the coastline within the park, although rocky headlands between Walkerville South and Arch Rock can be difficult at high tide.

The park provides an opportunity to establish and promote an overnight coastal walk using sections of beaches and the existing track network. The walk could take in the area's natural attractions, remoteness, coastal views, diverse geology and cultural features, including the Cape Liptrap lighthouse. Bushwalkers would use existing camping areas at Bear Gully and Five Mile Track or commercial accommodation neighbouring the park. Development of the walk and its exact route would be determined on the basis of detailed investigations of the environmental and cultural impacts and likely maintenance requirements.

#### **Aim**

- Provide a variety of high-quality walking opportunities within the park, while minimising impacts on park values.

#### **Management strategies**

- *Maintain existing walking tracks to the standards detailed in table 3.*
- *Formalise a nature walk using existing tracks at Point Smythe.*
- *Investigate establishing a walking track from Cape Liptrap to the neighbouring rock platforms.*

- *Establish a new walking track linking Thompsons Road to Waratah Bay township. Use existing firebreaks where possible.*
- *Investigate providing overnight walking opportunities within the park using beaches and the existing track network.*
- *Promote walking opportunities through information shelters and Park Notes. Ensure that information encourages minimum-impact walking and promotes safety (location of walking routes, campsites and the need for tidal information).*

### **5.8 Horse riding**

Horse riding in the park is currently restricted to the ocean beach between Venus Bay and Arch Rock and on firebreaks at Waratah Bay. Venus Bay No. 1 Beach and the Five Mile Track are popular points of access to the ocean beach.

Potential impacts from horse riding include disturbance of beach-breeding birds, possible interference with other visitors, the potential for damage to tracks and the possible spread of weeds. There is also potential for conflict between horse riders and other beach users at the ramp leading to Venus Bay No. 1 Beach.

Horse riding on beaches has been identified as one of the factors disturbing Hooded Plover habitat and breeding. The Hooded Plover, which is listed as threatened under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act, has been recorded as breeding on Venus Bay Beach between August and April.

Because of the park's small size, lack of suitable tracks, the potential for conflict with other visitors and the impact on Hooded Plover, opportunities for horse riding are necessarily restricted.

The intertidal area of the beach between the South Gippsland Regional Water Authority outfall pipeline and Arch Rock is considered the most appropriate part of the park for this activity.

#### **Aim**

- Provide opportunities for horse riding while minimising this activity's adverse

environmental effects and conflicts with other users.

### Management strategies

- *Allow horse riding within the park only in the intertidal area of the beach (below the high water mark) between Arch Rock and the South Gippsland Regional Water Authority outfall pipeline. Allow access to the beach only via Five Mile Road.*
- *Prohibit horses from all other areas of the park.*
- *Introduce a permit system for recreational riders to:*
  - *promote contact between riders and Parks Victoria;*
  - *provide riders with information including a map, park horse riding regulations, and any restrictions on riding locations;*
  - *assist monitoring use of the park.*
- *Monitor the impact of horse riding on environmental values (including the Hooded Plover) and other park users. Take appropriate management actions to control any impacts.*
- *Encourage use of minimal impact techniques and adherence to the Horse Riding Code (CNR 1994).*

## 5.9 Cycling

The extensive public road network neighbouring the park allows for a wide range of cycling experiences, although the level of cycling within the park is low.

Mountain-bike riding is expected to increase in popularity because of the interesting and challenging cycling opportunities offered by existing firebreaks through the heathlands and woodlands near Walkerville and Waratah Bay. The *Mountain Biking Code* (CNR 1993) sets out guidelines for safe cycling and methods to minimise the impacts of cycling on park values.

### Aim

- Provide access for cycling, and at the same time minimise the environmental impact of

cycling and the conflict with other recreational activities.

### Management strategies

- *Permit cycling on open roads, firebreaks, and beaches within the park. Prohibit cycling on the walking tracks.*
- *Encourage adherence to the Mountain Biking Code.*

## 5.10 Dogs

Walking of dogs on leads is currently allowed throughout the park. Dogs can cause conflicts with other users, especially in the more highly used sections of the park, such as popular swimming beaches and the Bear Gully camping area. There have been several reported dog attacks in the park, and dog faeces can be a problem at some high-use sites.

Dogs can be a potential source of annoyance and distress to some visitors and, if uncontrolled, could pose a threat to beach-breeding birds and other wildlife. Many visitors with dogs do not abide by the regulation requiring them to keep their dog on a lead.

Dogs are permitted in a number of areas near the park, including the Inverloch Foreshore Reserve and the coastal reserve between Waratah Bay and Sandy Point. Restrictions exist in some of these reserves concerning the times when dogs are permitted during the summer.

### Aim

- Provide for dogs in certain areas of the park, consistent with protecting park values and the experience of visitors.

### Management strategies

- *Allow dogs on leads in the following beach areas of the park:*
  - *between Walkerville North and Walkerville South;*
  - *between Venus Bay No. 1 and Venus Bay No. 5 Beaches;*
  - *between Waratah Bay settlement and Cooks Creek.*

- *Between 1 December and 31 March allow access to the above areas between the hours of 6 pm and 9 am only.*
- *Prohibit dogs from all other areas of the park.*
- *Monitor the impact of dogs in the park on wildlife and other visitors. Take appropriate management action to control any impacts.*

### **5.11 Hang-gliding and paragliding**

Hang-gliding occurs from an informal cleared area on the cliffs near Cape Liptrap. Use of the site is limited to days of suitable wind strength and direction. The size of the carparking, launching and landing area is limited, making the site unsuitable for large groups or events.

The site is currently unlicensed and significant clearing of vegetation has been undertaken in the past to provide a launch area. Because of public safety concerns, the Marsh and McLennan risk audit of the park (Parks Victoria 1998b) recommended the closure of the existing launching area.

Hang-gliding and paragliding are regulated under the *Civil Aviation Act 1988* (Cwlth) by Civil Aviation Orders 95.8 and 95.32. The Hang-gliding Federation of Australia is charged with maintaining the regulations of the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA). Additional controls apply to the activity within the park.

#### **Aim**

- Provide opportunities for hang-gliding and paragliding while minimising the impact on park values and other uses.

#### **Management strategies**

- *Permit hang-gliding and paragliding from the existing launch site at Cape Liptrap. Close the existing vehicle access track and provide alternative walk-in access to the launch area. Rehabilitate the vehicle access track and other degraded areas at the site.*
- *Licence the use and maintenance of the Cape Liptrap launch site to the Hang-*

*gliding Federation of Australia or its delegate.*

- *In conjunction with the Victorian Hang-gliding and Paragliding Association (VHPA) develop a site management plan for the Cape Liptrap launching area.*
- *Prohibit use of the site for organised hang-gliding and paragliding events.*
- *In conjunction with the Victorian Hang-gliding and Paragliding Association provide signs warning the public of potential dangers and conflicts at the Cape Liptrap launch site.*

### **5.12 Fossicking**

Gemstone fossicking has taken place for many years within the Cape Liptrap Coastal Park. Gemstones such as jasper, serpentine and other siliceous pebbles are common within the coves between Cape Liptrap and Walkerville South. The former Land Conservation Council recommended that gemstone fossicking continue to be permitted within the park (LCC 1982), and section 32D of the National Parks Act provides for fossicking areas to be designated.

A miner's right (permit) is required to search for minerals, including gemstones, on Crown land. This authorisation restricts any fossicking to the use of hand tools, which may include a pick, shovel, cradle or panning dish.

#### **Aim**

- Provide an opportunity for gemstone collecting in the park, while ensuring that the impact on environmental values and other visitors is minimised.

#### **Management strategies**

- *Designate part of the beach between Walkerville South and Cape Liptrap for gemstone fossicking pursuant to Section 32D of the National Parks Act.*
- *Monitor the impact of gemstone fossicking on environmental values and other visitors, and take appropriate management actions to control any impacts.*

### 5.13 Commercial services

The park makes an important contribution to commercial tourism opportunities within the region. In particular, the park offers opportunities for nature-based and cultural tourism.

The visitors attracted to the park benefit the accommodation, souvenir, craft and food outlets in Venus Bay, Tarwin Lower, Fish Creek, Sandy Point, Walkerville and Waratah Bay.

Activities currently offered by licensed tour operators include coastal walking, camping, sightseeing and birdwatching.

Well-organised tour groups can help interpret park values and minimise impacts. A co-ordinated effort between tour operators and park management can result in the provision of high-quality services and the protection of park values.

Commercial accommodation is readily available near or adjacent to the park. This ranges in style from caravan parks and houses for rent to four-star resort accommodation. The existence of a wide range of accommodation near the park and the proximity to several small towns makes the construction of additional infrastructure within the park unnecessary.

#### Aim

- Provide opportunities for commercial tourism and the touring public while minimising environmental impacts and effects on other visitors.

#### Management strategies

- *Co-operate with local government and local tourism bodies to improve visitor information.*
- *Ensure that all licensed tourism operators working in the park are licensed and have appropriate training and accreditation.*
- *Liaise with licensed tour operators to provide information and advice on appropriate activities and on the park's values.*

- *Monitor the activities of licensed tour operators to assess potential impacts on park values.*

### 5.14 Public safety

Visitors are exposed to a number of natural hazards when they visit the park, and this is a major concern for management. Most of these risks are experienced in all coastal areas and are not peculiar to the park. Public information and education programs are one of the most effective ways to promote safety.

Parks Victoria is not the lead response agency for most emergency situations. Legally and practically, Parks Victoria relies on the Department of Sustainability and Environment, the Country Fire Authority, the State Emergency Service and the Victoria Police for the co-ordinated response, with Parks Victoria as a support agency where required.

The Surf Lifesaving Association of Victoria provides a beach patrol service at Venus Bay No.1 Beach during summer. Surf Lifesaving Australia prepared a risk rating for all Victorian beaches in 1996. Many of the beaches within the park received a high risk rating or were considered not suitable for swimming (Short 1996).

Marsh and McLennan prepared a risk management report highlighting public liability exposures that exist and remedial works required in the park (Parks Victoria 1998b). The report identified a lack of adequate risk control at a number of the sites that were assessed, particularly in regard to hazard warning signs.

#### Aims

- Promote safe visitor use of the park.
- Ensure that park management has adequate capacity to respond to emergency situations.

#### Management strategies

- *Ensure that Municipal Emergency Response Plans make adequate provision for likely incidents in the park.*
- *Undertake periodic risk management audits.*
- *Co-operate with emergency services in search and rescue activities.*

- *Ensure that park staff are adequately trained in emergency procedures.*
- *Include information on visitor safety in park information.*
- *Install warning and regulatory signage where appropriate to advise visitors of risks to public safety.*
- *Provide information on beach safety at major swimming beaches.*
- *Continue to support the Surf Lifesaving Association of Victoria in the provision of lifesaving services at Venus Bay No.1 Beach.*

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## 6 STRATEGIES FOR COMMUNITY AWARENESS AND INVOLVEMENT

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### 6.1 Friends and volunteers

Volunteers can make valuable contributions to park management, and their involvement will be encouraged. There is strong local interest in the park and the Friends of Walkerville, Walkerville Foreshore Committee of Management and Walkerville Ratepayers Association already provide an important community focus for that area.

The formation of a Friends group for the park would provide an additional opportunity for community involvement.

A volunteer Camp Host has been based at the Bear Gully camping area over the summers of 2000–01 and 2001–02 (section 5.4). Camp Hosts play a valuable caretaking role in assisting visitors in camping areas and by providing visitor orientation information, ensuring facilities are in clean and tidy condition and alerting Parks Victoria to disturbances or breaches of regulations.

In addition, the park provides opportunities for tertiary students to gain work experience through research activities. These students could provide valuable assistance in resolving park management issues while gaining important on-site experience in natural resource management.

#### Aims

- Provide opportunities for and encourage the participation of groups and volunteers in protection, conservation and maintenance projects to enhance the management of the park.
- Provide opportunities for and encourage tertiary students to undertake volunteer work experience and research consistent with park management aims.

#### Management strategies

- *Encourage the formation and support of a Friends group for the park.*

- *Develop a long-term volunteer strategy that incorporates the skills and interests of volunteer groups and individuals in park management activities and is consistent with operational policies.*
- *Arrange for a volunteer Camp Host to provide a caretaking role at the Bear Gully camping ground over holiday periods.*
- *Provide support to tertiary students to undertake work experience and research activities that assist park management.*
- *Encourage volunteer involvement from the wider community.*

### 6.2 Community awareness and park neighbours

The park has long boundaries with adjoining rural private land and also abuts the Township of Walkerville (Walkerville North and South) and settlements at Venus Bay and Waratah Bay. Co-operation with adjoining landowners is essential in matters such as fire management and the control of weeds and pest animals.

Developing support from the local community for park management actions is also highly desirable and requires a comprehensive consultation and information program.

Although most neighbours are involved in agricultural enterprises, there is an increasing amount of residential (small rural holding) development along the park boundary.

Nearby residential development can directly impact on both the park and its neighbours. Associated issues include pest plant and animal control, fire management and the maintenance of boundaries. Where residential development adjoins the park, potential impacts include loss of landscape values, uncontrolled access and encroachments into the park.

The South Gippsland Shire Council manages infrastructure within and near the park. Park visitors also use many services provided by the Shire.

**Aims**

- Increase community awareness of park management activities, including prescribed burning, pest plant and animal control and visitor management activities.
- Encourage conservation and sound land management practices on private land adjacent to the park.

**Management strategies**

- *Maintain liaison with local community groups and landowners and, where*

*appropriate, involve them in relevant aspects of planning and managing the park.*

- *Apply and encourage the application of the Good Neighbour Program to management issues on or near the boundary of the park.*
- *Maintain the strategic partnership with the South Gippsland Shire Council regarding road maintenance and provision of services, including garbage and waste disposal.*

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## 7 STRATEGIES FOR OTHER ISSUES

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### 7.1 Authorised uses

#### Public utilities

There are a number of structures and utilities in the park managed by government authorities or service suppliers. An outfall pipeline operated by South Gippsland Regional Water Authority (SGRWA) for dairy waste effluent crosses the park south-west of Venus Bay and discharges into the intertidal zone. The Cape Liptrap lighthouse is an unmanned navigational light managed by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA). The lighthouse is situated within a small area (Cape Liptrap Lighthouse Reserve) managed by Parks Victoria under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978* (Vic.).

At Walkerville, power transmission lines maintained by TXU Australia Pty Ltd cross the park in some locations. Access to power lines is maintained and vegetation under the lines is regularly cleared.

Telstra also has utilities passing through the park at various locations.

#### Occupancies

The Venus Bay Surf Lifesaving Club building occupies a site within the park at the Venus Bay No. 1 Beach. The building is new and its surrounds are bare and require landscaping. The Club building was relocated farther from the beach than the previous clubhouse to improve parking and access and because the original site is at serious risk from coastal erosion.

#### Water supply

The Waratah Bay Caravan Park, which is managed by a lessee for the South Gippsland Shire Council acting as a Committee of Management, draws water from a water supply dam within Cape Liptrap Coastal Park, above the caravan park.

The Foreshore Reserve campground at Walkerville North, which is managed by an elected Committee of Management, draws water from Champagne Creek within the park.

#### Aims

- Manage public utilities and authorised uses in accordance with the National Parks Act, to minimise their impacts on the parks natural and scenic values.
- Protect water quality in the park and provide for appropriate use of water resources.

#### Management strategies

- *Survey and record the precise location of all utilities within the park.*
- *Review the location of road and other drainage systems relative to the off-take points or water supply dams in the park.*
- *Remove all unauthorised private water supply pipelines from the park.*
- *Seek replacement of all overhead TXU or Telstra lines within the park with underground cabling, as the opportunity arises.*
- *Rationalise and concentrate utilities to minimise impacts on the park and to protect foreground views and sightlines at popular visitor sites.*
- *Maintain vehicle access to the Cape Liptrap lighthouse to allow for servicing by AMSA.*
- *Arrange Section 27 consents under the National Parks Act for public utilities in the park.*
- *Arrange appropriate consents under the National Parks Act for the continued occupation of the Venus Bay Surf Lifesaving Club site.*
- *Formalise existing arrangements for the taking of water from the park for use in the Walkerville Foreshore campground and Waratah Bay Caravan Park.*
- *Ensure that the area surrounding the Venus Bay Surf Lifesaving Club building is landscaped to improve appearance and prevent erosion.*

## 7.2 Boundaries and adjacent uses

The park varies from little more than a narrow coastal strip to substantial areas of native vegetation rising to the Hoddle Range. The length of the park boundary is about 60 km on the landward side, which is very high for a total park area of 4175 ha. The high boundary to area ratio makes the park vulnerable and sensitive to impacts from adjoining land uses.

The boundary of the park is poorly defined on the ground and unclear in some areas. It is probable that some fences are not on the park boundary.

The majority of the park adjoins private agricultural land and also abuts the settlements of Venus Bay, Waratah Bay, Promontory View Estate and the Township of Walkerville. The major issues between adjacent land use and the park are the impacts on the park's natural values from development or clearing, fire protection, and the effect of pest plants and animals on the park's natural values.

The Walkerville Foreshore Reserve adjoins the park at Walkerville North and Walkerville South. An elected Committee of Management manages the reserve. Many of the recreational activities and management issues that occur within the park are common to the Walkerville-Foreshore Reserve. Co-operative management programs could improve the management of the park.

Refuse transfer stations managed by the South Gippsland Shire Council adjoin the park at Promontory View Estate and Venus Bay No. 3 Beach. South Gippsland Shire Council, as a Committee of Management, manages the foreshore reserve adjacent to the park at Waratah Bay. The reserve includes picnic facilities, beach access tracks and a caravan park (managed by a lessee). Many visitors access the park at Waratah Bay through this reserve.

A number of small freehold blocks occur within the park at Point Smythe.

The South Gippsland Shire administers private land use through the South Gippsland Planning Scheme. The park is zoned Public Conservation and Resource Zone (PCRZ). Two Environmental Significance Overlays apply to the park and adjoining private land

(ESO 3 Coastal Areas and ESO 5 Areas Susceptible to Erosion). Their purpose is to protect the natural beauty of coastal areas and protect areas prone to erosion from land disturbance and vegetation loss.

There is an increasing amount of residential development in small rural holdings along the park boundary and neighbouring the settlements of Venus Bay and Waratah Bay. This development, together with a rise in the permanent population in the neighbouring coastal towns, will place increasing pressures on the park.

### Aims

- Accurately define park boundaries on the ground.
- Ensure adequate planning controls for adjoining land developments are in place.
- Co-operate with adjacent landowners to protect both private and park areas from fire, pests and other hazards.

### Management strategies

- *Undertake a desktop survey of aerial photographs and cadastral information to pinpoint anomalies in park boundary definition.*
- *Liaise with the South Gippsland Shire Council regarding suitable controls and issues relating to development adjoining the park.*
- *Continue the arrangement by which DSE, as a referral authority, assesses planning permit applications that are relevant to the management of the park, in consultation with Parks Victoria.*
- *Encourage nearby landowners to protect existing indigenous vegetation adjoining the park through mechanisms such as the placement of conservation covenants on title, agreements under section 173 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 (Vic.), and the Land for Wildlife scheme.*

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## 8 IMPLEMENTATION

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This plan provides the strategic framework that governs the development and delivery of all management programs and actions affecting Cape Liptrap Coastal Park.

The management programs for the park are prepared annually, in accordance with Parks Victoria's Corporate Plan and as a part of statewide, prioritised programs.

The performance of the plan's implementation will be measured by monitoring and recording the number of strategies implemented to June each year.

Amendments may be made to the plan from time to time consistent with an authorised approval process. A partial or complete review of the plan will be considered from five to ten years after its publication.

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**APPENDIX 1 THREATENED FLORA**

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	THREATENED STATUS <sup>1</sup>		FFG ACT <sup>2</sup>	
		AUSTRALIA	VICTORIA	STATUS	ACTION STATEMENT
<i>Adriana quadripartita</i>	Coast Bitter-bush		v		
<i>Atriplex paludosa</i> spp. <i>Paludosa</i>	Marsh Saltbush		r		
<i>Caladenia vulgaris</i>	Slender Caladenia		k		
<i>Eucalyptus kitsoniana</i>	Bog Gum	R	r		
<i>Hydrocotyle comocarpa</i>	Fringed Pennywort		v		
<i>Monotoca glauca</i>	Currant-wood		r		
<i>Prasophyllum affine</i>	Heathland Leek-orchid	E	k		
<i>Pterostylis pedoglossa</i>	Prawn Greenhood		v		
<i>Schoenus turbinatus</i>	Top-bog Sedge		r		
<i>Sowerbaea juncea</i>	Rush Lily		r		

Source: NRE 2002a

<sup>1</sup> Threatened in Victoria (TIV) status:

- e endangered
- v vulnerable
- d depleted
- r rare
- k species poorly known

National threatened status:

- E endangered
- V vulnerable
- R rare

<sup>2</sup> Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 (Vic.) status

## APPENDIX 2 THREATENED FAUNA

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	THREATENED STATUS <sup>1</sup>		FFG ACT <sup>2</sup>	
		AUSTRALIA	VICTORIA	STATUS	ACTION STATEMENT
<b>MAMMALS</b>					
<i>Antechinus minimus</i>	Swamp Antechinus		LR		
<i>Arctocephalus pusillus</i>	Australian Fur Seal		Vul		
<i>Miniopterus schreibersii</i>	Common Bent-wing Bat		Vul		
<b>BIRDS</b>					
<i>Ardea alba</i>	Great Egret		End	L	Not available
<i>Biziuria lobata</i>	Musk Duck		Vul		
<i>Coturnix chinensis</i>	King Quail		CEn	L	Not available
<i>Diomedea exulans</i>	Wandering Albatross		CEn		
<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	Little Egret		CEn	L	Not available
<i>Falco subniger</i>	Black Falcon		End		
<i>Haliaeetus leucogaster</i>	White-bellied Sea-Eagle		End	L	No. 60
<i>Larus pacificus</i>	Pacific Gull		LR		
<i>Macronectes giganteus</i>	Southern Giant-Petrel		End	L	Not available
<i>Morus serrator</i>	Australasian Gannet		Vul		
<i>Neophema chrysogaster</i>	Orange-bellied Parrot	E	CEn	L	No. 43
<i>Ninox strenua</i>	Powerful Owl		End	L	No. 92
<i>Numenius madagascariensis</i>	Eastern Curlew		LR		
<i>Nycticorax caledonicus</i>	Nankeen Night Heron		Vul		
<i>Pachyptila turtur</i>	Fairy Prion		LR		
<i>Pelecanoides urinatrix</i>	Common Diving-Petrel		LR		
<i>Phalacrocorax fuscescens</i>	Black-faced Cormorant		Vul		
<i>Phalacrocorax varius</i>	Pied Cormorant		LR		
<i>Platalea regia</i>	Royal Spoonbill		Vul		
<i>Stercorarius pomarinus</i>	Pomarine Jaeger		DD		
<i>Sterna bergii</i>	Crested Tern		LR		
<i>Sterna caspia</i>	Caspian Tern		Vul		
<i>Sterna nereis</i>	Fairy Tern		Vul	L	Not available
<i>Thinornis rubricollis</i>	Hooded Plover		End	L	No. 9
<b>REPTILES</b>					
<i>Egernia coventryi</i>	Swamp Skink		Vul	L	Not available
<i>Varanus varius</i>	Tree goanna		DD		
<b>FISH</b>					
<i>Lovettia sealii</i>	Australian Whitebait		Vul		

Source: NRE (database) 2002b

<sup>1</sup> Threatened status:

CEn critically endangered in Victoria

Vul vulnerable in Victoria

End endangered in Victoria

LR lower risk—near threatened in Victoria

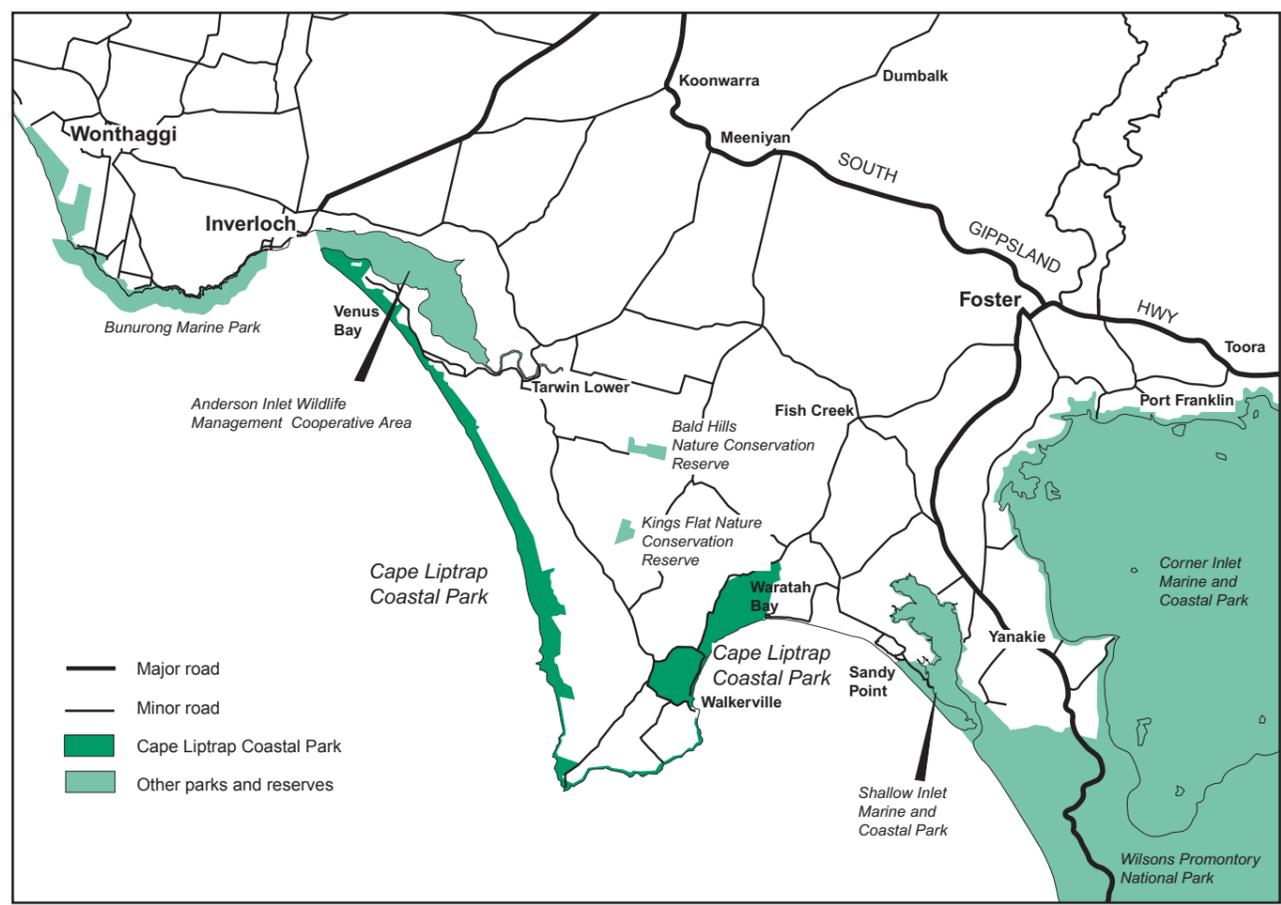
DD data deficient

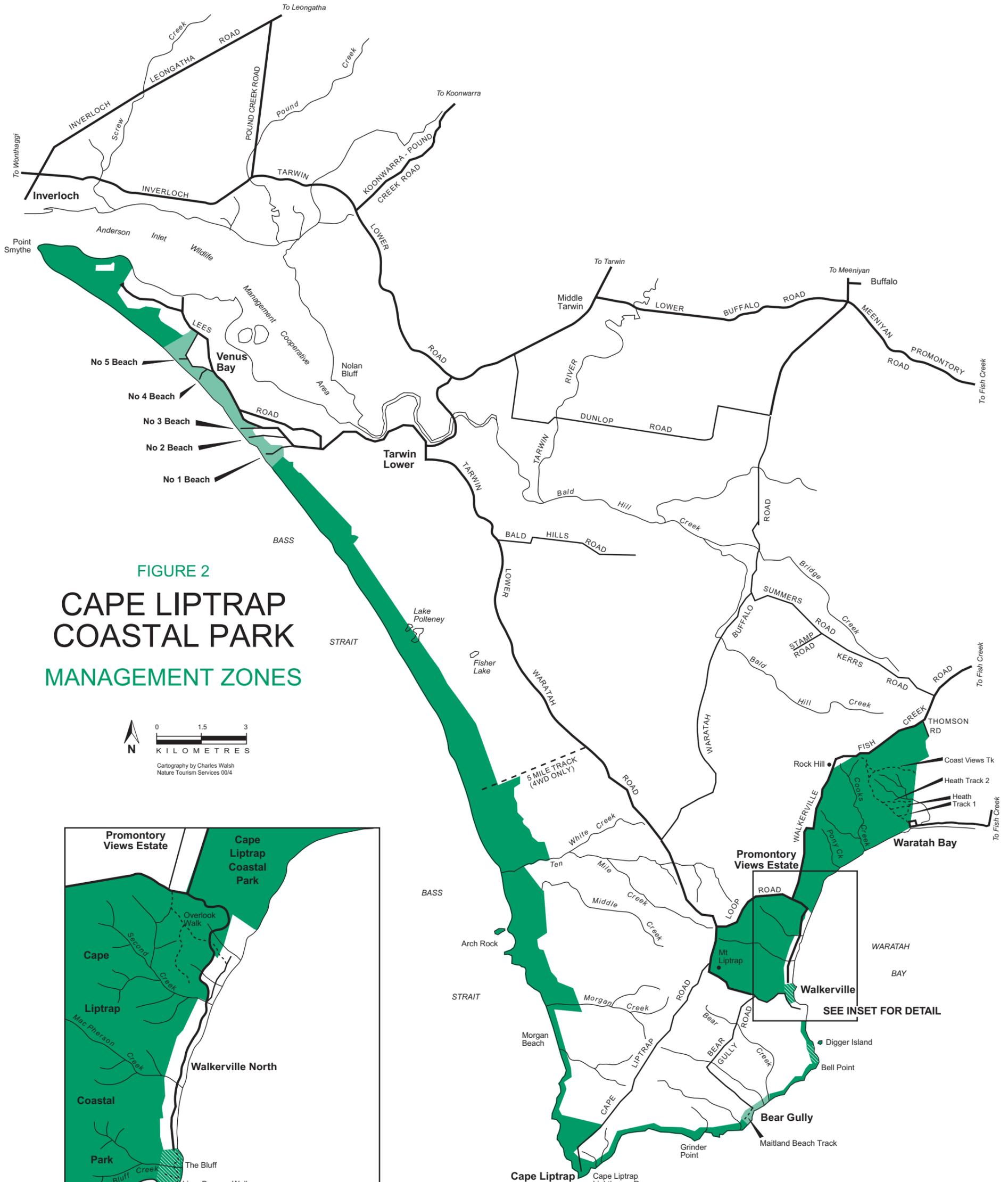
<sup>2</sup> Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 (Vic.) status

E      endangered in Australia

L      listed under the Act

FIGURE 1  
**CAPE LIPTRAP  
 COASTAL PARK**  
 REGIONAL LOCALITY PLAN

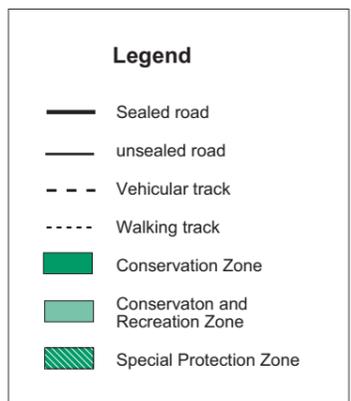
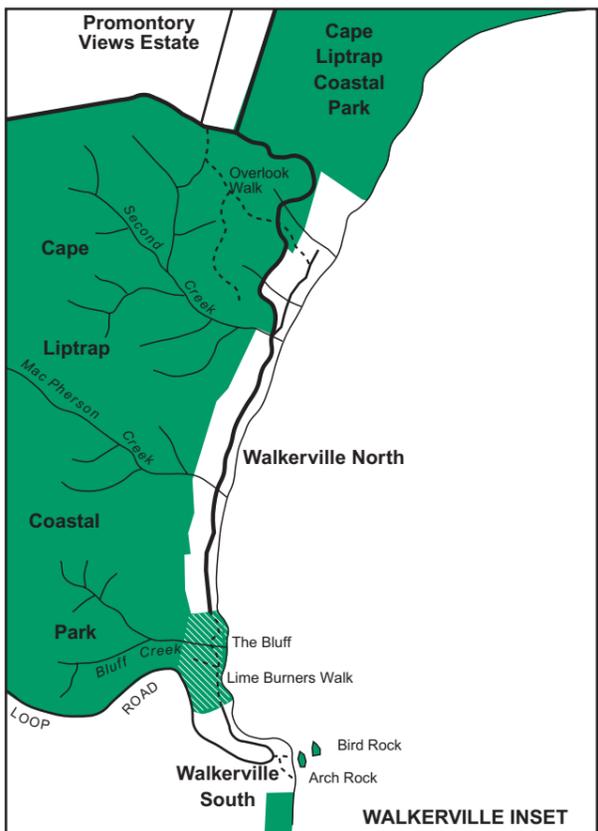


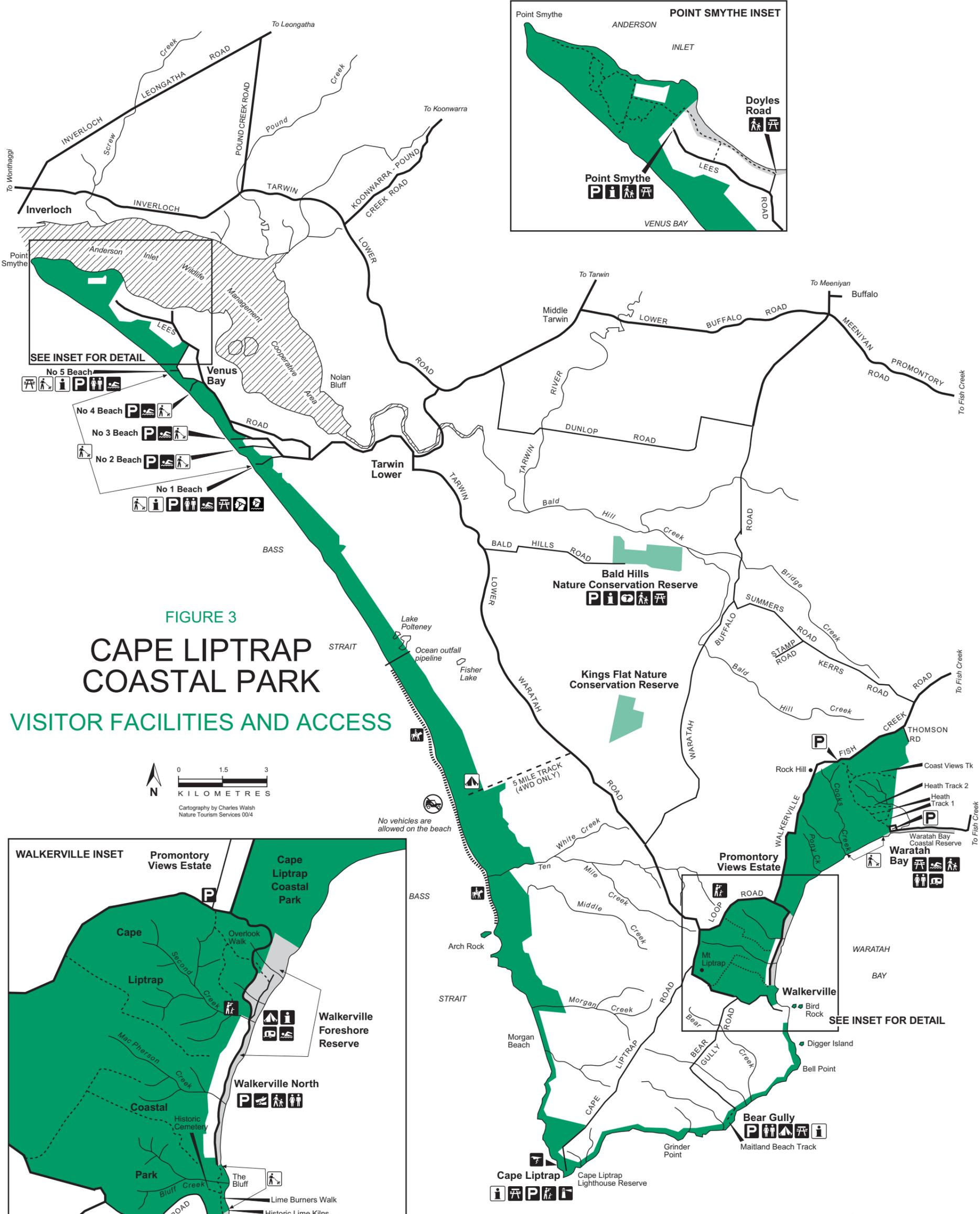
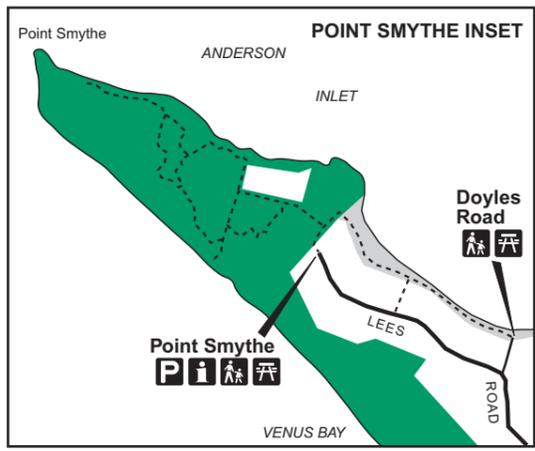


**FIGURE 2**  
**CAPE LIPTRAP**  
**COASTAL PARK**  
**MANAGEMENT ZONES**

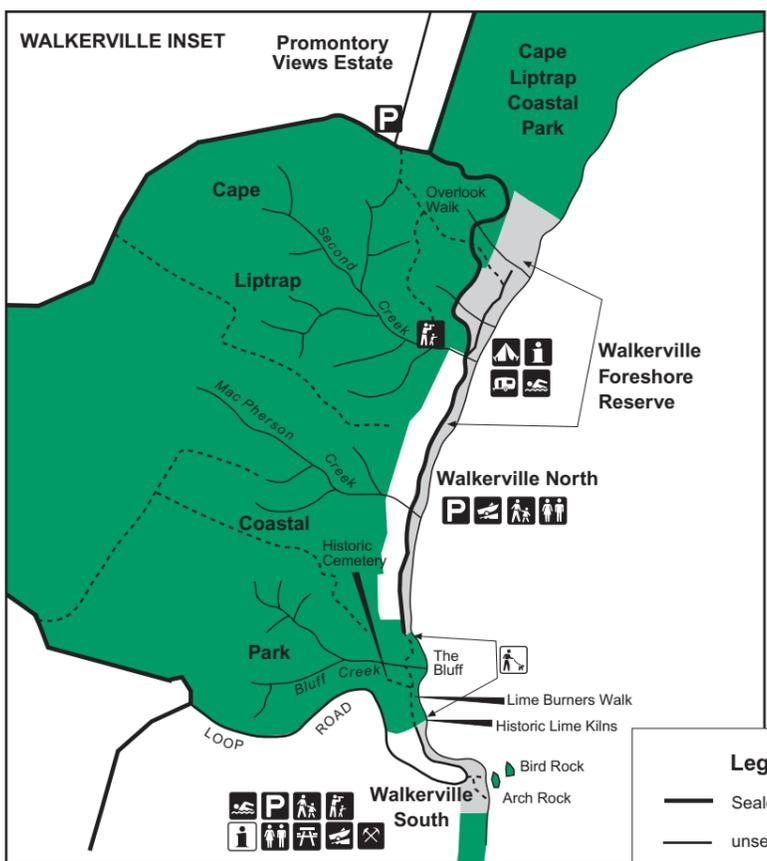
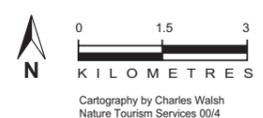


Cartography by Charles Walsh  
 Nature Tourism Services 00/4





**FIGURE 3**  
**CAPE LIPTRAP COASTAL PARK**  
**VISITOR FACILITIES AND ACCESS**



Legend		Existing Recreational Facilities		Proposed Recreational Facilities	
	Sealed road		Camping		Camping
	unsealed road		Lookout		Information
	Vehicular track		Boat launching site		Swimming beach
	Walking track		Picnic area		Caravan park
	Horsering area		Walking track		Wildlife hide
	Cape Liptrap Coastal Pk.		Toilets		Historic lime kilns
	Other reserve		Parking		Hang gliding & paragliding
	Wildlife Management Cooperative Area		Surf Life Saving Club		Lighthouse
	Other public land		Patrolled beach		No vehicles
			Horsering		Camping
					Information
					Picnic area
					Walking track
					Parking
					Dogs on leash