

# Media Release

**The Hon Melissa Horne MP**

Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation

Minister for Ports and Freight

Minister for Fishing and Boating



Friday, 9 October 2020

## WORK STARTS ON REEF RESTORATION IN PORT PHILLIP BAY

Fishers will soon reap the rewards of new infrastructure in Port Phillip Bay, with work now underway on the first of two major reef projects near Geelong.

Minister for Boating and Fishing Melissa Horne said reef works have started at Nine Foot Bank off Geelong Arm, using an Australian-first restoration technique.

The degraded shellfish reef will be restored through the deployment of 500 square metres of recycled shells from restaurants and the seafood industry. The recycled shells will create new substrate on the seafloor for the remaining oysters in the area to colonise.

The restored reef will provide more habitat for fish in Port Phillip Bay, Victoria's largest recreational fishery and home to outstanding snapper, whiting, flathead and calamari fisheries.

The government is investing \$500,000 in the reef at Nine Foot Bank - which is being built in partnership with The Nature Conservancy, which is contributing \$600,000 to the project. Construction and seeding at the site will be finished by the end of the year.

The start of works at Nine Foot Bank comes just a week after a further \$700,000 was announced to build three other reefs in Corio Bay.

The reef restoration projects will improve the marine ecosystem by enhancing water quality and marine biodiversity.

Target One Million is delivering better fishing across Victoria's bays, estuaries, lakes and rivers by stocking record numbers of fish, removing commercial net fishing from Port Phillip and the Gippsland lakes, and improving fish habitat including reef development.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Fishing and Boating Melissa Horne

*"Improving fish habitat means more homes for fish and better fishing for people who are out on the water."*

*"The Target One Million plan is making a real difference to recreational fishing in Victoria by investing in projects which boost fishing in local communities."*

### Quotes attributable to Member for Lara John Eren

*"Once work on this reef has finished at the end of the year, Geelong residents will have access to a fantastic new fishing spot."*

*"This project is providing important jobs for people working in maritime construction and will be a long-term boost for the region."*