

Media Release

Ms Mary-Anne Thomas MP
Minister for Regional Development
Minister for Agriculture



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WORKS ADVANCING ON BULLOCK ISLAND REDEVELOPMENT

Works are underway to redevelop Bullock Island as part of the Andrews Labor Government's drive to bring more visitors to Victoria's east.

Minister for Regional Development Mary-Anne Thomas was today joined by representatives from the Lakes Entrance Fishermen Group and East Gippsland Shire Council to tour the works being completed on the island.

The Bullock Island Masterplan received \$1.87 million through the *Building Works Package* and is happening alongside the development of an on-water cafe, thanks to the Labor Government's earlier investment of \$1.5 million announced during the lead up to the 2018 state election.

A new amenities block has been completed on the western side of the island and a local consultant has been appointed to oversee design development of the recreational areas within the masterplan. The overall project will include upgraded parking access, fishing platforms and visitor facilities such as barbecues and connecting boardwalks.

Construction of the Bullock Island on-water cafe will soon begin with a head contractor expected to be announced in coming weeks.

The combined projects are expected to generate up to 13 jobs during construction and six ongoing positions at the café when it is operational.

Bullock Island is responsible for producing around 3,500 tonnes of seafood and contributes about \$40 million to the Victorian economy each year.

The new development will support Bullock Island's transformation as a major tourism attraction and help the region recover from recent challenges associated with drought, bushfires and, more recently, the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic. Both the café and masterplan work are expected to be completed in 2022.

The *Building Works Package* was announced in response to the pandemic and is a \$2.7 billion commitment to get thousands of Victorians back to work with shovel-ready projects that provide lasting benefits to communities.

Other investments being made across the region include \$3 million to help establish the Metung Hot Springs, \$1 million for the Nunduk Spa and Eco-Resort, \$1.1 million to redevelop the Paynesville seafront as well as additional funding for the Lake Entrance Slipway, Riviera Nautic and Raymond Island Koala Sanctuary.

Quote attributable to Minister for Regional Development Mary-Anne Thomas

"These investments will help Bullock Island to capitalise on its unique maritime traditions, attracting thousands of new visitors by improving tourism infrastructure and at the same time, creating local jobs."

Quote attributable to Member for Eastern Victoria Jane Garrett

"The Gippsland Lakes are a jewel in Victoria's east and it's exciting to see progress underway in this region – including at Bullock Island which is the gateway to Lakes Entrance."

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