

Media Release

The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP

Minister for Energy, the Environment and Climate Change
Minister for Solar Homes



Thursday, 24 June 2021

NEW NATIONAL PARKS AND RESERVES FOR VICTORIA

Victoria's central west will have 65,106 hectares of new national parks further protecting the area's unique environment and giving Victorians and tourists more opportunities to enjoy the great outdoors.

Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio announced the national parks today together with new reserves that will protect habitat for rare and threatened species and ensure the region remains a drawcard for recreation and tourism.

The new national parks will be created by linking existing state forests, parks and reserves. The largest will bring together Lerderderg State Park and much of the existing Wombat State Forest to create a new national park covering more than 44,000 hectares between Daylesford and Bacchus Marsh.

A 15,000-hectare Pyrenees National Park will be created north west of Avoca, and a 5282-hectare Mount Buangor National Park will double the size of the existing State Park north of Buangor.

New conservation parks covering 5246 hectares in areas with a high biodiversity value have also been created to protect precious flora and fauna. A further 7560 hectares are being added to expand existing nature and bushland reserves. Regional parks will be expanded by 27,735 hectares.

The Government is investing in facility upgrades throughout the region, including upgrading campgrounds and new and upgraded walking trails and facilities, will continue through the \$105.6 million *Victoria's Great Outdoors* program.

The new national parks and reserves announced today builds on the 186,000 hectares already protected from timber harvesting announced in November 2019. When logging of native forests ends in 2030 a further 1.8 million hectares of forest will be protected.

Public land in Victoria is the most accessible in the country and with today's announcement, Victorians will continue to be able to go camping, four-wheel driving, horse-riding and prospecting across the central west, with many sites to be upgraded.

Today's announcement follows the release of the Government's response to the Victorian Environmental Assessment Council's Central West Investigation Final Report. Local communities and stakeholders including Traditional Owners were consulted extensively during the investigation.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio

"Our parks, reserves and forests help safeguard our unique flora and fauna and provide Victorians with space to enjoy the great outdoors and connect with nature."

"These changes will improve how we manage and care for our precious natural environment, and will ensure these areas can be used for recreation for generations to come."

"We're listening to the communities that use and care for these areas and balancing the needs of public land users, industry and the environment."

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