

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



Tuesday, 1 March 2022

GRANTS AWARDED TO IMPROVE BOATING ACCESS

Getting out on the water will be made more accessible at a range of Victorian boat ramps with the Andrews Labor Government reinvesting boater registration and licencing fees to fund new dredging grants.

Available through the Recreational Boating Access and Dredging Program and overseen by Better Boating Victoria, six organisations are sharing in newly awarded grants worth a total of \$487,490, to be invested across seven projects.

In Port Phillip Bay, grants will improve boating access at Tootgarook and Half Moon Bay through maintenance dredging, while two kinds of dredging – a trial of a cutter section dredge and use of a long reach excavator – will be undertaken at the entrance of Kananook Creek in Frankston.

At Gippsland Ports, a grant worth \$148,760 will be used to conduct maintenance dredging at 'The Cut' on the Mitchell River near Paynesville, providing better access for boaters launching at Eagle Point boat ramp, and removing debris from the water.

The City of Greater Geelong has been awarded \$76,000 to develop a 25-year dredging management plan for Clifton Springs harbour – ensuring its viability and reducing the frequency of maintenance dredging currently required, which has been undertaken in recent months with a long reach excavator.

Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water will put a \$71,000 grant towards the development of a detailed future dredging plan for Lake Lonsdale and Lake Fyans. Sand and silt accumulate at these inland lake boat ramps, and the funding will be used to carry out detailed surveys and commence planning and approvals to support future dredging at these locations.

The grants complement Better Boating Victoria's recently launched *Recreational Boating Structural Maintenance Program*, which invests up to \$2 million for facility managers to contribute toward significant structural maintenance.

An unprecedented increase from the previous \$5 million per year investment, the Better Boating Fund delivers on a promise the Labor Government made to Victorians at the 2018 election to ensure all money from the licence fees, and recreational vessel registration of Victorian boaters goes to improving boating infrastructure and programs.

The Department of Transport and Better Boating Victoria manage the fund's distribution – having already made it free to park and launch at Victorian boat ramps – and has embarked on the most significant boat ramp construction program in the state's history.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Fishing and Boating Melissa Horne

"We know easy access to our waterways is vital for boaters when launching or retrieving their vessels, and these grants will allow facility managers to make this possible now and into the future."

"Grants programs like this are ensuring boater registration and licencing fees are being reinvested in ways that will improve the boating experience for all Victorians."

Media contact: Isobel Loschiavo 0431 963 479 | Isobel.loschiavo@minstaff.vic.gov.au