

# Media Release

**Ms Harriet Shing MLC**

Parliamentary Secretary for Creative Industries

Parliamentary Secretary for Equality

Parliamentary Secretary for Water



Monday, 30 May 2022

## **PARTNERING WITH GIPPSLAND COMMUNITIES TO RESTORE OUR WATERWAYS**

The Andrews Labor Government is supporting the long-term recovery of communities and the environment after the Black Summer fires.

Since 2020, more than \$7.6 million has been invested in bushfire recovery projects led by East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority, helping to rebuild the health of local waterways and increase the resilience of surrounding farm land.

Parliamentary Secretary for Water Harriet Shing visited Buchan Valley today, to see some of the bushfire recovery works that have already been completed and regeneration of vegetation, including fence reconstruction.

The Black Summer fires burnt over a million hectares in East Gippsland, severely damaging riparian ecosystems and catchments along the Snowy, Tambo, Nicholson and Mitchell Rivers.

These projects will directly support communities to restore and repair priority natural assets, address water quality, sedimentation and the health of our catchments and waterways. This will also contribute towards the regions economic recovery by restoring rivers for tourism opportunities and productive uses.

Works are ongoing, including monitoring and assessment of water quality and improved weed control to tackle infestations of willows and other invasive species which have taken hold in our waterways and productive lands.

Since the fires, over 116 kilometres of priority riparian fencing has been replaced and 1,226 hectares of weeds, such as willow, broom, and blackberry, have been cleared to help waterways recover naturally.

The Labor Government also contributed \$900,000 to repair and expand Emergency Water Supply Points across East Gippsland and North East Victoria.

Investing in Victoria's emergency water supply points will safeguard many Victorian towns in a bushfire event and improve community resilience against drier climate conditions.

### **Quotes attributable to Parliamentary Secretary for Water Harriet Shing**

*"East Gippsland's communities and waterways have had a long and difficult journey since the bushfires, and it's so important that we continue to support their recovery now and into the future."*

*"This program has engaged communities, citizen scientists, and landholders to ensure the best outcome for waterway health into the future."*