

Media Release

Steve Dimopoulos MP

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events
Minister for Creative Industries



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GIPPSLAND SET TO REAP BENEFITS IN TOURISM BOOST

The Gippsland region is set to expand its epicurean offering and walking trail experiences, thanks to a \$3.9 million investment from the Andrews Labor Government.

From Maffra to Toora and Woodside to Noojee, the four projects supported by the *Regional Tourism Investment Fund* will create new jobs in construction, drive visitation and create ongoing employment throughout Gippsland.

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Steve Dimopoulos today announced the investment included a \$3 million redevelopment of the popular Rokeby to Noojee Trail, creating a significant scenic tourism drawcard in the Baw Baw Shire.

Stage one of the Rokeby to Noojee Trail will develop a high-quality 14-kilometre walking experience, which will include upgrading the existing Rokeby Crossover trail and extending it to the Apex Lookout. This stage of the project is expected to be complete in mid-2024.

Maffco Brewery and Taphouse in Maffra will benefit from a \$400,000 investment to transform an old milk factory into a unique craft brewing experience featuring a taphouse, working brewery, dining and separate function area.

The project is set to be complete in mid-2023, ensuring the region remains firmly on the foodie map for tourists and locals alike.

The Red Pig Bakery in Toora will develop an adjoining 62 seat cafe and wine bar while the historic building and its 130-year-old scotch oven will be restored after a \$325,000 investment from the Labor Government.

Undergoing a \$170,000 expansion that will see three new luxury accommodation pods, the iconic Woodside Beach Hotel upgrade will also include an events pavilion to host one-off ticketed events.

The four projects are expected to create a total of 77 full-time construction jobs and 123 ongoing full-time positions. The investment will also provide further support to Gippsland's local businesses and economy.

Gippsland continues to be a major drawcard for visitors, attracting 6.4 million holidaymakers in the year ending December 2019, who stayed 7.2 million nights and contributed \$1.1 billion to the local economy.

Quote attributable to Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Steve Dimopoulos

"Gippsland is already one of Victoria's iconic tourism destinations and that's why we're backing businesses to make the experiences even better, attracting visitors to stay longer and spend more."

Quote attributable to Minister for Regional Development Harriet Shing

"Food and nature are a big part of the story in Gippsland and this support for local projects means more people will be able to discover the region's rich local flavours, hospitality and beautiful outdoors."

Quote attributable to Member for Eastern Victoria Tom McIntosh

"These tourism infrastructure projects are vital to encouraging more tourists to the area, ensuring our local businesses and communities thrive stronger than ever before."

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