

Media Release

The Hon Gayle Tierney MP
Minister for Skills and TAFE
Minister for Regional Development



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SEA TO PLATE DINING IS A CATCH AT GIPPSLAND LAKES

Bullock Island's new café will add to the charm of the Gippsland Lakes and draw new visitors to the area, with support from the Allan Labor Government.

Minister for Regional Development Gayle Tierney today joined representatives from the Lakes Entrance Fishermen Limited (LEFL) at the brand new café at Lakes Entrance, offering spectacular water views as diners enjoy their locally sourced meal.

Supported with \$1.5 million, the café has created nine new local jobs and is one of several projects backed by the Labor Government to drive economic recovery across East Gippsland.

Since opening in late December, the Off the Wharf café has attracted more than 1,300 visitors a week. The café offers a true sea-to-plate dining experience and the opportunity to purchase fresh seafood from LEFL's fish monger on site.

The café is complemented by significant infrastructure upgrades on Bullock Island as part of an additional \$1.87 million investment to the Bullock Island Masterplan from the Government's *Building Works* package.

Improved parking access, new fishing platforms, barbecues, boardwalks and landscaped areas have transformed Bullock Island into a recreational destination set to attract thousands more visitors each year.

Also on the Lakes Entrance Foreshore, the Old Slipway site has been given a new lease of life as a prime waterfront location, supported with \$562,000 from the Allan and Albanese Labor Government's *Local Economic Recovery* program.

The historic site will be used for events, dining and recreation, with a multi-tiered deck built over the concrete slipway, new accessible toilets and upgraded car parking.

The \$68.6 million *Local Economic Recovery* program supports local projects vital for community recovery, driving economic growth and boosting industry and jobs across bushfire-affected regions.

Boat charter company Riviera Nautic has also been supported through the program, redeveloping and expanding its jetties in Metung to boost its operations offering experiences across all corners of the Gippsland Lakes.

The expansion will increase the company's fleet of boats yachts and motor cruisers by 25 per cent, leading to an almost doubling of their berthing capacity along with an additional 400 charter days and 1,600 visitors each year.

The projects are part of the Government's record investment of more than \$41 billion in rural and regional Victoria over the past decade. For more information go to rdv.vic.gov.au.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Regional Development Gayle Tierney

"The beautiful Gippsland Lakes are a major drawcard in Victoria's east and these investments will help the area attract thousands more people each year."

"We're backing local businesses, creating new jobs and improving livability for local communities to set the foundations for economic recovery and resilience well into the future."

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Quote attributable to Member for Eastern Victoria Tom McIntosh

“We are excited to support these projects – these investments will attract even more visitors to explore Gippsland Lakes and all it has to offer, while boosting local jobs and businesses.”