

# Media Release

**The Hon Ros Spence MP**  
Minister for Agriculture  
Minister for Community Sport  
Minister for Carers and Volunteers



Friday, 23 May 2025

## NEW ADVENTURE FOR EAST GIPPSLAND TOURISM BUSINESS

The Allan Labor Government is helping an East Gippsland business expand into a tour operator through the Forestry Transition Fund – unlocking new opportunities for business growth, jobs and drawing more visitors to the area.

The \$50,000 grant will support Bruthen Outdoor Gear to build new headquarters to pack, store and clean outdoor recreation gear as well as provide food and a space for employees.

The new headquarters will enable the business to transition from an equipment hire business to a tour operator catering to ecotourists and school outdoor education groups of up to 100 people. The additional space will mean the business can provide more outdoor recreation offerings in the future, such as hiking.

Established in 2021, the business has provided outdoor recreation gear for rafting, canoeing and sea kayaking to individuals and to local outdoor tour companies.

The East Gippsland region was certified as an ecotourism destination by Ecotourism Australia in 2023. The project's Nature Tourism Working Group is currently exploring ways to showcase the region's natural and Traditional Owner heritage using digital technologies such as Augmented Reality.

The Forestry Transition Program continues to invest in East Gippsland, providing support and grants for native timber businesses to transition their operations and other local businesses to expand.

This investment has resulted in 84 per cent of native timber workers in the area remaining in employment – either in their existing jobs or finding new work, creating 32 jobs.

Transition Fund grants are currently available to interested businesses and organisations looking to create new jobs in communities impacted by the end of native timber harvesting. A \$20,000 employment incentive payment is also available for businesses that hire ex-native timber workers. Visit [deeca.vic.gov.au/forestry](https://deeca.vic.gov.au/forestry) or call 1800 318 182.

### Quote attributable to Minister for Agriculture Ros Spence

*"Bruthen Outdoor Gear is another example of how the Forestry Transition Program helps local businesses to transform and pursue expansions that benefit the entire community."*

### Quote attributable to Minister for Eastern Victoria Tom McIntosh

*"Bruthen Outdoor Gear will help people from across the state and the world get out into the natural beauty that East Gippsland has to offer."*

### Quotes attributable to Bruthen Outdoor Gear Assistant to the CEO, Aly Nichol

*"This funding enables us to be seven years ahead of schedule for the expansion of the business and strengthens our ability to support other local businesses and groups"*

*"Our new facility means we no longer wash and dry gear in the rain and we will have space to pack, repair and store gear clearly so employees can access this easily"*

**Media contact:** Pam Kiriakidis 0472 725 548 | [pam.kiriakidis@minstaff.vic.gov.au](mailto:pam.kiriakidis@minstaff.vic.gov.au)