

Media Release

The Hon Gayle Tierney MP
Minister for Skills and TAFE
Minister for Water



Saturday, 18 October 2025

NEW FACES IN GIPPSLAND LAKES COORDINATING COMMITTEE

The Gippsland Lakes Coordinating Committee is welcoming new community members to help deliver local projects that protect and enhance the health of the Ramsar listed wetland.

Minister for Water Gayle Tierney announced the members to the Gippsland Lakes Coordinating Committee, which plays a key role in advocating and supporting the long-term health of Gippsland Lakes and their catchments.

The committee will comprise five new community members – independent Chair Eric Sjerp and directors Charles Solomon, Chris Barry, Joanna Rule and William Runciman – alongside returning community members Jessica Reeves and Christine Wrench.

They will join Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation representative Charee Smith, and members from Victorian public sector agencies.

The Committee will oversee the Labor Government's \$6 million investment to continue improving the health of the Lakes through management, improving facilities and community engagement.

This builds on \$20 million of investment since the Committee's establishment in 2015 to deliver important environmental outcomes – from protecting threatened species and creating new fish and frog habitats, to installing seagrass-friendly moorings, restoring sand dunes, and improving waterways for wildlife.

The announcement coincides with the 'Welcome Back the Birds' community event at Eagle Point, celebrating the return of migratory birds to the Gippsland Lakes.

Each spring, the Gippsland Lakes becomes home to more than 90 species of waterbirds, including the critically endangered species such as Bar-tailed Godwit, Common Greenshank, Latham's Snipe and Sharp-tailed Sandpiper – some travelling thousands of kilometres from as far away as Alaska.

Quote attributable to Minister for Water Gayle Tierney

"The Gippsland Lakes are a precious resource for all Victorians, and the Coordinating Committee plays an invaluable role in protecting and improving the health of the Gippsland Lakes for more locals and visitors to experience."

Quote attributable Member for Eastern Victoria Tom McIntosh

"The Gippsland Lakes and surrounds are an incredible asset to East Gippsland and Victoria as a whole. I welcome the new committee members, thank them for their service, and look forward to the delivery of the next round of programs for the region."

Quote attributable to Bec Hemming, CEO of East Gippsland CMA

"We are proud to be on the ground across the Lakes working with Gunaikurnai Traditional Owners, partners and community to deliver programs backed by science and ongoing monitoring to continue to improve the environmental health of the Gippsland Lakes."