

Media Release

The Hon Jacinta Allan MP
Premier



Tuesday, 21 October 2025

OUR PLAN FOR VICTORIA'S GREAT OUTDOORS

Victorians love the bush – it's part of who we are. With the end of native timber harvesting, the Allan Labor Government is backing community access to our forests – keeping them open, healthy and ready to explore.

As part of our plan for Victoria's great outdoors, we're investing \$30 million to unlock 1.8 million hectares of state forests in Gippsland and North East Victoria with better tracks and trails, and amenities to boost regional tourism.

We want to make sure locals have a say on the projects that matter most to them and how money is spent in their patch of the bush – that's why we're investing \$4 million to pilot Healthy Forest Plans with the Orbost and Noojee communities.

We're also investing \$14.2 million to improve tracks and trails, campgrounds and toilets as well as upgrades at key spots like Heyfield's Cheynes Bridge Recreation Area, Buckland Valley Visitor Experience Area and next stage of the Yackandandah Creek Masterplan - creating new reasons for travellers to stop, stay and spend locally.

To keep the bush in top shape, we're also putting more boots on the ground with \$7.2 million for extra rangers to guide visitors, tackle pests and weeds, and protect native wildlife.

Victorians love getting out into nature – whether it's camping, hunting, fishing, hiking or just soaking up the quiet. This investment keeps our forests open for everyone to enjoy, now and for generations ahead.

Following the end of native timber harvesting, the Government commissioned the Great Outdoors Taskforce to reimagine the future of Victoria's forests to meet community expectations.

Informed by extensive consultation and expert advice from the Eminent Panel for Community Engagement, we are releasing the Government's Response, backed by targeted investment to promote community access, support regional economies, and better manage the forest.

In 2021, the Government announced it would create three national parks, two conservation parks, and seven new and expanded regional parks in the state's central west. This legislation is now before the Victorian Parliament and there will be no further changes to our state forests.

This is about giving Victorians more say and more ways to enjoy their own backyard while keeping the bush healthy and open for all Victorians.

To view the Government's full response to the Great Outdoors Taskforce and Eminent panel for Community Engagement visit, deeca.vic.gov.au/futureforests.

Quotes attributable to Premier Jacinta Allan

"My focus is to bring more families to the bush and more jobs to the regions – and that's exactly what our plan for Victoria's great outdoors will do."

"Our forests remain open to every single Victorian and visitor alike – to enjoy hunting, fishing, camping, bushwalking and all the benefits of the bush."

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Quote attributable to Minister for Environment Steve Dimopoulos

“By ending large-scale native timber harvesting, we’ve given our forests a future. Now we’re making sure every Victorian can share in it.”

Quote attributable to Member for Eastern Victoria Tom McIntosh

“You can't appreciate our brilliant bush unless you get out amongst it, and that's exactly what this package supports.”

Quote attributable to Member for Eastern Victoria Harriet Shing

“We’re making it easier for people to get outdoors with upgraded trails, better facilities and more opportunities to explore the natural beauty of Gippsland.”