

# Media Release

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



Friday, 19 December 2025

## NEW WETLAND SITE OPENS IN EAST BAIRNSDALE

The Allan Labor Government has transformed the Crooke Street stormwater drain into a thriving wetland – boosting local waterway health and helping to improve water quality in the Ramsar listed Gippsland Lakes.

Minister for Water Gayle Tierney announced that the \$1.4 million project has improved urban drainage by reducing flood risk, improving water quality, and reducing litter entering Jones Bay.

The Government invested \$325,000 in funding towards the project through its Integrated Water Management Program, supporting efforts to improve stormwater management, protect the Gippsland Lakes, and create a healthier environment for the East Bairnsdale community.

East Gippsland Shire Council constructed the wetland at the Crooke Street site. Two gross pollutant traps have also been installed in the nearby Hoddinott Street Reserve to further reduce pollutants flowing into Jones Bay.

The drain was discharging untreated run off directly into Jones Bay Wildlife Reserve, but the site now uses natural processes – vegetation, soil and controlled water flow – to filter stormwater before it enters the Gippsland Lakes.

The construction of the wetland has also provided a recreational area for residents to enjoy.

The Gippsland Lakes provide an essential habitat for many species and are crucial for migratory birds, which travel long distances to breed there each year.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Water Gayle Tierney

*"This is a great example of transforming an area that was once full of weeds and rubbish into a vital ecosystem that is supporting diverse plant and animal life."*

*"Improving the quality of the water discharging into the Gippsland Lakes will contribute to improving the overall health of this important environment."*

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

*"The Gippsland Lakes are such an important part of our region, and this wetland is a step forward in protecting them. It's great to see natural solutions making a real difference."*

### Quote attributable to Cr Jodie Ashworth Mayor East Gippsland Shire Council

*"This wetland is an important step in strengthening how we manage stormwater in this growing part of town. We're improving water quality, easing flood risk and creating a greener, more welcoming space for East Bairnsdale residents."*