



Diamond Valley Bushwalkers at a Grampians Base Camp, November 2010 (Photo: Ian Bates)

Contributions

Email or post news, views, club profiles, articles, photographs, sketches and letters on any subject of interest to bushwalkers (subject to editorial approval) to:

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The statements and opinions expressed in articles are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views or position of Bushwalking Victoria.

Editor: Joslin Guest

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WALKING AND TALKING WITH YOUR PRESIDENT

Floods

As I write this column, the flood crisis in northern and western Victoria is still unfolding, with many households, towns and farms inundated and many, many more facing the same prospect. Elaine and I can really relate to what the flood victims are facing, as 22 years ago, six weeks after we were married, we were the victims of a flash flood that inundated our unit to a depth of over a metre at 2am. The immediate impact for all those with flooded homes and properties will be days, if not weeks, of hard physical work to sort through belongings, and clean away the mud and other debris borne in on the flood water. Anyone who has been through a flood will also never forget the smell of dampness, mould and putrefying matter. We know that the financial and emotional effects of the flooding will be keenly felt long after the water has receded and homes and belongings are clean once more.

Elaine and I join with all of the bushwalking community in extending our thoughts and sympathies to all those affected.

The Year Ahead

Improving Communication

The current Bushwalking Victoria governance structure of a board of management was introduced in 2007 at the same time as the organisation changed its name from the Federation of Victorian Walking Clubs. Under the previous structure, a council of delegates from all member clubs governed the organisation. An advantage of the old structure was good communication channels between the organisation and member clubs—at least with those clubs that were able to send a delegate to council. While the current structure provides a much better way to manage our activities, it does make communication with our 64 member clubs and their members much more of a challenge. In this day and age of rapid change, quick and effective communication is vital for all organisations, including Bushwalking Victoria. While the World Wide Web and Email are important tools in this regard, personal face-to-face communication is still much more effective.

In 2011 Bushwalking Victoria intends to introduce a number of initiatives to help address these communication challenges. The new initiatives include a club visit program, a Leadership Forum and improved use of the World Wide Web and electronic communication channels.

Club Visit Program

The club visit program involves each member club being visited by a Board member or office bearer. The visit could be to a club meeting, club walk or be a specially organised event. These visits will provide an opportunity for all concerned to discuss issues and ideas and to share information. Each club will be contacted directly to arrange a visit.

Leadership Forum

The Leadership Forum replaces the annual Presidents' Day, with the leadership team (ie. the president, vice president, secretary and treasurer) of each club being invited to attend. The forum will be a fantastic opportunity to learn about the work undertaken by Bushwalking Victoria and member clubs, and to contribute ideas and opinions that will build a stronger and more successful Bushwalking Victoria and club network. More details will be provided directly to clubs in coming months.

The inaugural Leadership Forum will be held in Melbourne on Saturday 18 June 2011, and we ask all club committees to pencil this date into their calendars now.

Virtual Communication Channels

Many of our member clubs have a website and many also use Email as a useful tool to communicate with their members and committee. However a scan of club websites reveals a wide range in quality, comprehensiveness and currency of information provided and a diverse range of designs. This demonstrates to me that there is a need for Bushwalking Victoria to provide advice and assistance to clubs to help them create and maintain an effective Web presence and to make better and more efficient use of Email.

Bushwalking Victoria currently doesn't have the capacity or capability to do this on its own. However I am hopeful that during coming months this situation will change.

Outdoor Recreation Centre Review

In November and December 2010 an external consultant conducted a strategic review of the Outdoor Recreation Centre (ORC). Bushwalking Victoria is a founding member of the ORC and we have been involved in the ORC committee of management for many years. The ORC is also the landlord for our office at Recreation House at Westerfolds Park. The ORC is the 'central hub' for all providers of outdoor recreation-based activities within Victoria, such as educational institutions, camps, commercial providers and not-for-profit organisations like Bushwalking Victoria and Orienteering Victoria. The consultant's report was delivered in mid-December and contains a range of hard-hitting findings and recommendations for very significant changes to the ORC, some of which are likely to impact on Bushwalking Victoria. The report is not yet available to the public and both Sport and Recreation Victoria and the ORC committee are discussing what happens next. I will expand on this topic when the details can be made public.

Are you the next BWV Secretary?

Bushwalking Victoria will be looking for a new Secretary to take over from Val Wake, the current incumbent, following the AGM to be held on 18 June this year. Val commenced in the role at the 2008 AGM and as Bushwalking Victoria's

rules limit office bearers to a maximum term of three years, she must vacate the position at the 2011 AGM.

The duties and responsibilities of the Bushwalking Victoria Secretary differ from those typically associated with a secretary as the role is more about compliance rather than traditional administration responsibilities (eg. the Secretary is not responsible for minute taking) though there are still some of these.

Of course the pay is terrible—ie. there isn't any—however the rewards are many, as you get to work with a dedicated

and enthusiastic group of people and will be able to contribute to the development of Victorian bushwalking and bushwalking clubs. If you have a passion for bushwalking, a desire to make a difference, enthusiasm and new ideas, or you know of someone in your club who you think fits the bill, I would be very happy to hear from you.

Chris Towers

See also my article about the return of cattle grazing to the Alpine National Park on page 9.

POSITION VACANT

Bushwalking Victoria – Auditor

Our current auditor is moving interstate and we are looking for a replacement.

The Bushwalking Victoria financial year is from 1 April to 31 March. Consequently the annual audit is performed during April each year.

The accounts are maintained on MYOB, so experience with this software would be desirable. Formal accounting qualifications are not a prerequisite but would be an advantage.

If you are interested in making a valuable contribution towards bushwalking in Victoria and good governance by Bushwalking Victoria please contact me on 94397092 or at treasurer@bushwalkingvictoria.org.au

Fred Bover
Treasurer, Bushwalking Victoria

Bushwalking News Victoria Advertising Rates

1/6 page advertisement	\$26.25	Note: Advertisements must be artwork ready * Advertiser to supply 300 printed inserts each edition. Advertising is welcome but insertion is subject to the Editor's discretion. Products or services advertised in this publication are not endorsed or recommended in any way by Bushwalking Victoria.
1/4 page advertisement	\$42.00	
1/3 page advertisement	\$52.50	
1/2 page advertisement	\$78.75	
Full page advertisement	\$157.50	
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Great Ocean Walk



Talk to us when planning your next visit to the Great Ocean Walk. We specialise in the western leg of the walk i.e. from Cape Otway to Port Campbell.

We offer:

- 1 - 4 day all inclusive packages (transport, accommodation at Portside Motel Port Campbell, packed lunches and transfers)
- Transport from Melbourne for groups of 6 to 20
- Escorted tour of Twelve Apostles and historic Loch Ard Gorge with our senior guide who has worked in the Port Campbell National park for 15 years as a ranger and Ranger in Charge.

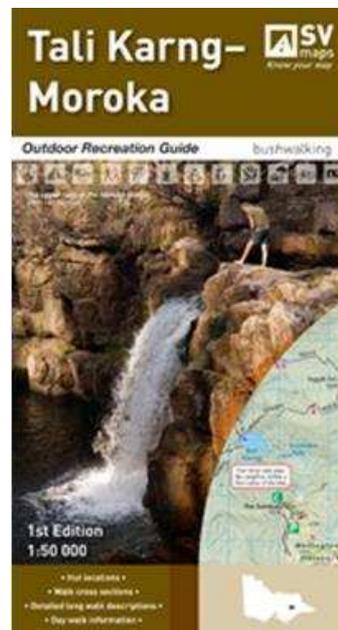
We are more than happy to assist you to plan your walking adventure on the Great Ocean Walk.
T: (03) 5598 6424 / 0447 986 423 E: info@portcampbelltouring.com.au www.portcampbelltouring.com.au



NEW MAP—TALI KARNG-MOROKA

The Tali Karng-Moroka map is the latest addition to Spatial Vision's excellent Outdoor Recreation Guide series.

- Scale: 1:50,000
- Coverage: Dargo and Licola, including the historic gold mining towns of Grant and Talbotville; walking trails such as McMillans Track and a section of the Bicentennial National Trail, and other bushwalking destinations including Moroka Gorge, Lake Tali Karng and The Crinoline
- GDA94
- Zone: 55
- Grid: 1000m
- Contour: 20m
- Edition: 1 (2010)
- Size folded: 135mm x 250mm
- Size unfolded: 1000mm x 810mm
- Features of interest include:
 - Hut locations
 - Descriptions of overnight and day walks by Glen van der Knijff
 - Walk gradings and cross-sections
 - Background information about the area
 - Information about activities such as horse riding, fishing, skiing and car touring
- Recommended Retail Price: \$11.95 (incl GST)



Editor's comments: Clearly delineated contours, water courses, roads, walking tracks, camping locations and infrastructure. Main walking track distances clearly marked in kilometres. Vegetation indicated.

SOME THINGS TO LOOK FORWARD TO

2011 Federation Day Walk—23 October

The Federation Day Walk in 2011 will be co-hosted by the Peninsula Bushwalking Club and the Catholic Walking Club of Victoria. The date of the event is Sunday 23rd October 2011. The walks will be on the southern half of the Mornington Peninsula, with an administrative centre at Rosebud.

Further information will be provided closer to the event, but meantime note the date for your club programs.

2012 Federation Weekend

2012 Federation Weekend will be hosted by Maroondah Bushwalking Club. Maroondah is investigating hosting walks in the Marysville area.

Cattle return to Victorian National Parks, cont from page 13

Professor Mark Adams—brief profile

Summary: 'I believe that real solutions to environmental problems are in the bush. I think that the best way to conserve natural resources is by using them wisely.'

Professor Adams is a passionate believer in 'conservation through use'.

Background: Mark Adams received his BSc (Hon) and PhD from the University of Melbourne. Mark is currently Professor and Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture at the University of Sydney. He has held Professorial appointments at the University of Western Australia, the University of Melbourne and, most recently, at UNSW.

Professor Adams publishes widely with a focus on

sustainability and biogeochemistry of natural and managed ecosystems.

Professor Adams is also involved with the 'high fire' (bushfires in the high country) research work. This project includes the monitoring of several long-term scientific sites throughout the Victorian and NSW high country.

Extracted from the **University of Sydney** website

http://sydney.edu.au/agriculture/staff/find_staff_member/staff_profiles/mark_adams.shtml

and the Mountain Cattlemens Association website

<http://www.mcav.com.au/#CATTLEBACK>

For information about HighFire Project of the Bushfire Cooperative Research Centre go to

<http://www.bushfirecrc.com/projects/b6/highfire>

CLUB ANNIVERSARIES

Strzelecki Bushwalking Club Is Turning 20

Strzelecki BWC, based in Trafalgar, invites all current and past members, friends and others who would like to join in to its celebration of 20 years of happy hiking.

Over the weekend of 26 and 27 March 2011 there will be walks on both days, and there will be a great dinner and bush dance on the Saturday night. Bring along old photos, relive hiking tales and renew friendships. Current members are offering accommodation.

Over Easter, the first hike the club undertook to the Bogong area will be revisited.

For more information and to register your interest, phone 5635 4288 or visit the website at www.swbc.org.au.



Maroondah Turns 30 this Year

Current and past Maroondah members need to check the club's activities program to make sure they catch all the celebratory events. The first event was a breakfast walk on the Warburton Rail Trail in January. The second is a base camp at Mt Buller in February, with a formal dinner on the mountain.



Ben Cruachan Walking Club Has Celebrated its 45th Birthday

The club had a great time on Friday 12 November at the Heyfield's Wetlands Centre where they celebrated 45 years of walking. Lots of folks attended.



REGENT HONEYEATER PROJECT—2010 REPORT

Firstly, a huge vote of thanks to the hundreds of hardy souls who came to help with our planting days in the winter and spring.

And thanks especially to the extra helpers in early December, who helped us finish the last few planting sites that were too wet to plant earlier in the year. Together with our own local team's efforts, they planted an amazing 3,789 seedlings from mid-November to early December, with an average team of only 5 or 6 people each day. These cheery crews proved once again just how much can be achieved by a small dedicated team.

With superb rains since then, all the plants are growing beautifully. I've seen new growth tips 2cm long just a few days after planting.

Planting totals for the year

- 974 school students were involved over 26 planting days, planting a total of 12,157 seedlings
- 350 volunteers were involved in the community planting events, planting 15,600 seedlings
- Grand total of 35,657 seedlings planted this year
- 110½ha of habitat restored on 24 sites
- 9.3km of fencing constructed

Dates for your calendar for 2011

- Nestbox monitoring: 12-13 March 9-10 April
- Planting weekends: 6-7 Aug 20-21 Aug 3-4 Sept 17-18 Sept

Ray Thomas

Extracted from the Regent Honeyeater Project Newsletter, Dec 2010

BUSHWALKING ENVIRONMENT

Track Maintenance Report— Freemans Mill Track Maintenance at Bunyip Creek North of Labertouche

Leader: Dave Rimmer (Bushwalking Victoria) and Parks Victoria. 25 volunteers from 8 bushwalking clubs

Back in July 2009, a few green shoots on blackened tree trunks greeted us when we set out to re-mark the walking track after the fires in this part of the Bunyip SP. The earth was bare. Now the Gembrook office of Parks Victoria had called for an ‘emergency’ effort to clear the track, and Dave Rimmer responded by calling for volunteers. Frankly, I thought it was a bit alarmist. I was wrong. When we arrived, I found it hard to believe we were in the same place. We could hardly find the track markers in the regrowth of trees, shrubs and ground cover. And our task was to clear it.

About 27 volunteers from 8 clubs had responded. We divided into groups and got to work with chainsaws, brushcutters and other tools and made good progress in restoring the track under the guidance of several Parks Victoria people.

Before departing for home there was a discussion on our work and about ways of improving it. Everyone thanked everyone else.

David Davies
VMTC

Some More about the Freeman Mill Track Maintenance Day from Strzelecki BWC

...It was slow work with so much vegetation to clear, but very rewarding at the end of the day to be able to walk back on a clear track to where we had started.

There were quite a few wildflowers still blooming—lots of mauve fan flowers, trigger plants and purple fringe lilies. Many of the surviving trees were covered with leafy shoots on black trunks and the bush looked very healthy...There is still a lot of clearing to be done. Another maintenance day will be organised—so if you missed out this time you will have another opportunity to be a ‘trailblazer’ for a day.

Fran Miller
Strzelecki Bushwalking Club Newsletter, Dec 2010, Vol 20 Issue 5



Parks Victoria rangers and Bushwalking Victoria volunteers (Photo: Regrowth, Dec 2010, DSE fire recovery newsletter)

SUNRISE & SUNSET —MELBOURNE GPO

Fri 28 Jan 0529 1937 EDST	Fri 11Feb 0545 1924 EDST	Fri 25 Feb 0600 1907 EDST
Fri 12 Mar 0615 1845 EDST	Fri 26 Mar 0628 1824 EDST	Daylight saving ends Sunday 3 April
Fri 9 Apr 0741 1903 EST	Fri 23 Apr 0753 1844 EST	Fri 6 May 0805 1828 EST
Fri 20 May 0817 1816 EST	Fri 3 Jun 0827 1809 EST	Fri 17 Jun 0834 1807 EST
Fri 1 Jul 0836 1811 EST	Fri 15 Jul 0833 1819 EST	Fri 29 Jul 0824 1811 EST

Full Moons

Fri 18 Feb, Sun 20 Mar, Mon 18 Apr, Tues 17 May, Thur 16 June, Fri 15 July, Sun 14 Aug, Mon 12 Sept, Wed 12 Oct, Fri 11 Nov, Sun 11 Dec
Source: www.ga.gov.au

TRACK MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

Sunday 20 Feb 2011 Condons Track	Contact Steve Robertson for details if you want to attend. Steve Robertson at srob7859@bigpond.net.au or 9762 5367
Sunday 27 March 2011 Goldfields Track	
Sunday 17 April 2011 Morleys Track	
Sunday 16th October 2011 Big Tree/Cora Lyn	

Invitation to join the 5-day activity in the Baw Baw NP

Everyone is welcome to join local Parks Victoria staff over a five-day activity on the Baw Baw Plateau (Baw Baw NP) between Friday 4 March 2011 and Tuesday 8 March 2011.

The activity will focus on the remaining 3km section of the Australian Alps Walking Track (AAWT) between Whitelaw Hut ruins and Phillack Saddle and will involve construction of 'water-bars' and clearing scrub from the track verge. Parks Victoria will establish a base camp for this activity at Jeep Track Flat from early Friday 4 March 2011. Access to the base camp is via the St Gwinear car park or Baw Baw Village. Ample water, fresh fruit, general consumables and energy food will be available for all participants and people attending only need to bring camping gear and their own basic food requirements that they would normally take on an extended bushwalk.

Participants are welcome for whatever time they can spare and there will be a variety of tasks to complete from very easy to arduous. All safety gear will be provided by Parks Victoria.

For further information, please contact the Parks Victoria Latrobe Ranger in Charge, Andy Gillham on 5172 2186.

Andy Gillham
Ranger in Charge-Latrobe, West Gippsland District

BEC REPORT

Summary of 2010 Activities

- Contributed input for Greater Alpine NP Management Plan
To view information about the plan, go to <http://weplan.parks.vic.gov.au/book/export/html/604> <http://www.parkweb.vic.gov.au/weplan/aac-info.pdf>
- Explored possible walking tracks in the Bunyip SP
- Met with the consultant regarding Kinglake NP
- Attended the announcement of the Grand Strzelecki Track
- Toured the proposed Grand Strzelecki Track
See also article on page 14
- Attended a 3-day strategy meeting at Falls Creek regarding AAWT
To view information about the strategy and operational plan go to <http://www.australialps.environment.gov.au/publications/research-reports/pubs/aawt-management-strategy-08-10.pdf>
- Conducted a Field Officers Conference at Westerfolds Park
- Met with Parks Victoria staff regarding the development of a Grampians long-distance walking track (Grampians Peak Trail)
See also article on page 15
- Gave a presentation at the Bushwalking Victoria AGM

- and Presidents' Meeting
- Participated in Freemans Mill Track assessments
- Met with DSE and subsequently provided input for the Go for Your Life Project for upgrading State Forest walking tracks, including attending Regional Selection meetings on for the State Forest walking tracks
- Participated in a meeting at Wilsons Promontory to discuss possible outstation improvements and general walking experiences
- Attended the official opening of Ritchies Hut

Track Maintenance and Conservation Activities

- Condons Track in the Yarra Ranges NP
- Grampians NP
- Freemans Mill in the Bunyip SP (see article on page 6)
- Snake Island tree planting

Challenges for 2011

- Further involvement in The Greater Alpine National Park Management Plan
- The return of cattle to the High Plains
See also articles on page 4 and 9-13
- State Forest walking track upgrades
- Track maintenance and conservation activities

Dave Rimmer
Manager Bushwalking Environment

CONTROL DIEBACK THREAT

Boot Washing

Dieback is the dying back of plants, and it often results in the death of many of our native plant species. It is frequently caused by *Phytophthora cinnamomi* (the disease commonly known as Cinnamon Fungus). *Phytophthora cinnamomi* is an invasive plant disease that lives in the soil. Many of our native plants have no resistance to it. About 2000 plant species—most of them Australian natives—are susceptible to the disease; they range from small plants to the giant jarrahs in WA. Collapsed grass-trees are one indicator of the presence of the disease.

It is important, therefore, to stay on the track when walking through diseased areas. If you walk off the track, your boots will carry and spread the infection.

The only way to remove the contamination from your boots is to clean all the soil from your footwear and wash and brush them with disinfectant before you leave the area.

- Carry a plastic trough, some methylated spirits, water and brushes for this purpose. Or use a stiff brush and spray the cleaned boots with a 70:30 methylated spirits-water solution.
- Insist that all of your walking group clean their footwear.

The spores of *Phytophthora cinnamomi* are tiny and have no cell walls, so they are very easily killed by a disinfectant. However, soil or gravel on your footwear prevents the disinfectant from reaching the spores.

Clean your footwear immediately. Do not wait until you get home to clean your boots.

Be responsible—do not destroy the bush you enjoy.

VNPA Bushwalking and Activities Program, p 23

Phytophthora cinnamomi and your Car

Phytophthora cinnamomi lurks on gravel and dirt roads and in many car parking spots in the bush and so is also spread by dirt stuck to the underbody and tyres of your vehicle.

To help arrest *Phytophthora cinnamomi*'s spread:

- Don't let any mud from your vehicle get into the bush. This is especially true if you have been driving on 4WD tracks and gravel/dirt roads. In other words, **don't take your vehicle off track.**
- You should wash the tyres and underbody of your car before and after each trip to a park or reserve.
- When washing mud off your car, beware! the muddy water could carry *Phytophthora cinnamomi* and provide it with the wet conditions that enable it to flourish. When the soil is very wet *Phytophthora*

cinnamomi produces millions of spores; each spore (less than one hundredth of a millimetre in diameter) has the potential to kill any plant, from the smallest to mature jarrah trees.

There was not much useful information on the Net about how to clean our vehicles either in the bush or at home to make sure that *Phytophthora cinnamomi* spores are not spread. One site suggested using pressurised water facilities and compressed air facilities. This is not a practical suggestion for bushwalkers. It also mentioned giving the vehicle a physical brush down and using a sterilising medium. Again not really practical.

The *Best Practice Management Guidelines for Phytophthora cinnamomi within the Sydney Metropolitan Catchment Management Authority Area* gives a bit of information about sterilising agents and equipment but no guidelines for their use by bushwalkers or ordinary drivers:

- Recommended disinfectant products and hygiene equipment include:
 - 70% Methylated spirits in spray bottle for personal use
 - Non corrosive disinfectants such as Coolacide®, Phytoclean® or Biogram® for cleaning footwear, tyres and other items that have come in contact with soil
 - Sodium Hypochlorite—1% is very effective but can damage clothing and degrades rapidly in light
- Recommended hygiene equipment we could carry in our cars to help us limit the spread of *Phytophthora cinnamomi* includes:
 - Spray bottles
 - A sterilising agent and water
 - A measuring cylinder
 - A tub large enough for dipping our footwear
 - Scraper and a coarse brush to remove mud from footwear and vehicles

Editor, Bushwalking News Victoria

DO YOU KNOW WHO NED WAS?

I have been doing some research into who Ned is (as in Ned's Saddle, Ned's Gully, Ned's Peak) at Cathedral Range SP. I have not found any definite information. I was hoping someone out there may be able to shed some light on Ned's identity.

I'm not looking for suggestions; I'm only interested in facts. If anyone is able to provide me with factual information as to Ned's identity please email me on rhyl.shaw@parks.vic.gov.au

Thank you.

Rhyl Shaw
Parks Victoria Ranger, Cathedral Range SP

CATTLE GRAZING RETURNS IN VICTORIAN NATIONAL PARKS

From the President of Bushwalking Victoria

I am sure that most bushwalkers will share my disappointment and even anger not only at the action of the new Baillieu government to reintroduce cattle grazing in the Alpine National Park but also at the manner in which this has occurred.

I certainly knew that the Liberal/National Party coalition included this policy in its election platform, so to that extent I am not surprised by the reintroduction of cattle grazing in the Alpine National Park. What has both surprised and disappointed me is the manner in which it has been done, especially given the public statements from the premier and others, both prior to the election and on forming government, that the new government would be open, transparent and there would be no spin.

Given these statements, at the very least I expected that peak bodies advocating on behalf of Alpine National Park users would have been provided with details of what was being planned and how and when it was to occur. Instead we and other groups (except presumably those supporting, or sympathetic to the Coalition government's intentions) only learned of the reintroduction of grazing through the media. What were they afraid of?

Furthermore, information on the DSE website about what is happening and planned only increases my disappointment. Some examples include (my comments in italics):

1. The title of the DSE web page is 'Changes to cattle grazing in Victoria's Alpine National Park'
Changes! They couldn't even bring themselves to say 'reintroduction', or 'bringing cattle back'. 'Changes' sounds so much 'softer'.
2. That there is not enough evidence to form an opinion about how effective strategic cattle grazing is for fuel and fire management purposes
*That is, the existing evidence doesn't support what we want to do so we will find a consultant scientist to gather the evidence we want.
In any case, bushwalkers who are regular visitors to the Alpine National Park don't need any more scientific evidence as it is there before our eyes already. As one who has been visiting the Park for several decades, I know how fantastic the high plains in particular are following seven years without cattle.*
3. Fuel reduction services will be provided by local graziers.
People usually get paid for providing services, so does this mean that the mountain cattlemen (lets call them what they are) are being paid for having their cattle in the Park?
4. It is a condition of the contract with fuel reduction service providers *(there's that spin again! why not call them by their proper name of 'mountain cattlemen')* that cattle be contained within designated sites.
How will the DSE make sure the cattle stay in the research area?

Regular monitoring will be done by Parks Victoria rangers to ensure that cattle are contained, and failure to do so may result in prosecution under National Parks (Park) Regulations 2003 and the termination of the contracts.

Presumably this means that rangers now have to add being a ringer/drover to their job description. Bushwalkers know that rangers are already overworked and under-resourced; and in fact farmers and graziers complain about this too. It is pretty unlikely that additional resources have been provided to assist Parks staff with this task.

Bushwalking Victoria, along with other like-minded organisations, will try to obtain more information on the future plans for this trial, and as forcefully as possible state our opposition to the reintroduction of grazing in the Alpine National Park.

Chris Towers

President, Bushwalking Victoria

Links to some **existing research about the impact of grazing on alpine environments:**

- Alpine Grazing—the impact of cattle grazing on alpine and subalpine plant communities of the Bogong High Plains <http://www.cowpaddock.com/report2.html>
- Grazing in the Victorian High Country (a Report to Parks Victoria) by CSIRO <http://www.cowpaddock.com/CSIROreport.doc>
- Maisie's remarkable plot (or the truth about grazing and fire on high plains grasslands) <http://www.cowpaddock.com/maisies.html>
- Victorian National Parks Association (VNPA) website

Victorian Government press release

<http://www.mcav.com.au/documents/110112%20R%20Smith%20%20Research%20begins%20on%20strategic%20cattle%20grazing%20to%20reduce%20bushfire%20risk.pdf>

Email address for Ryan Smith, Victorian Minister for Environment and Climate Change

ryan.smith@parliament.vic.gov.au

Links to DSE website:

- Changes to cattle grazing in Victoria's Alpine National Park: Research trial—strategic cattle grazing to reduce the risk of bushfire
<http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/DSE/nrenpr.nsf/LinkView/96607BDB8D7C34A9CA257817000F427425944F18CBF38C964A2567BD002971B9>
- Maps of scientific trial sites in the Alpine National Park
[http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/CA256F310024B628/0/315235ACA9FFFD53CA257817001377BB/\\$File/AlpineScientificTrial_Map_A0_Website_small.pdf](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/CA256F310024B628/0/315235ACA9FFFD53CA257817001377BB/$File/AlpineScientificTrial_Map_A0_Website_small.pdf)
ryan.smith@parliament.vic.gov.au
<http://www.vnpa.org.au>

Website of the Mountain Cattlemens Association

<http://www.mcav.com.au/#CATTLEBACK>

HELP STOP ALPINE CATTLE GRAZING – IT’S A PARK NOT A Paddock

Victorian National Parks Association
A voice for nature



In one of its first acts after winning the State election the Baillieu Government has returned cattle grazing to the Alpine National Park under the guise of ‘scientific research’, despite this destructive practice being banned in 2005 after a long-running VNPA campaign.



In what can only be described as a sneaky move, the Victorian Government this week opened the gates to 400 head of cattle, allowing them to trample and graze six sites across 25,600 hectares of the Alpine National Park.

TAKE ACTION!
KEEP OUR ALPS CATTLE FREE

The entire Alpine National Park is listed as a National Heritage Place, which requires that its use and management is consistent with the conservation of natural and heritage values.

Calling the return of cattle a ‘research project’ aimed at assessing whether or not grazing reduces bushfire pressure is the domestic equivalent of Japan’s ‘scientific’ whaling programs.

Studies show cattle grazing is not effective in reducing either the extent or severity of fire in the high country, and, notably, the

The cattle will be allowed to trash the Alpine National Park for the remainder of the 2010/2011 grazing season—which runs until April 30 this year. Read the details in our [media release](#).

Victoria’s Alpine National Park is extremely fragile and no place for cattle which pollute waterways, trample delicate wetlands, cause soil erosion and spread weeds. Cattle also reduce visitors’ enjoyment of the park by ruining what should be spectacular wildflower displays and covering areas in cowpats.

Returning cattle grazing to the national park will undo years of environmental restoration and threaten fragile and nationally significant alpine sphagnum moss beds and wetlands. It will also put at risk at least 12 other nationally listed species

Black Saturday Bushfire Royal Commission did not recommend the return of grazing as a fire-management tool. There are plenty of suitable sites outside the park where this research could take place. This so-called trial should be stopped immediately or shifted to other locations outside the national park.

The VNPA has [clear legal advice](#) confirming a strong case for federal government involvement under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.

We are calling on the federal environment minister, Tony Burke, to urgently use his powers under the Act to call the project in and demand a proper assessment of the potential impacts on matters of national environmental significance. **You can help.**

We need your support in stopping cattle grazing in the Alpine National Park. Help us remind decision-makers that this unique environment is a park, not a cow paddock.

We’ve already received a flood of letters protesting against this decision. Please join us by emailing, writing or telephoning those in power, and make yourself heard!

TAKE ACTION NOW

Help stop the Baillieu Government from turning Victoria’s Alpine National Park into a cow paddock.

Write to Federal Environment Minister Tony Burke, asking him to use Commonwealth powers to prevent this unnecessary and damaging activity in one of Australia’s most fragile alpine environments.

[Take action](#)

Also write to Victorian Premier Ted Baillieu, telling him the Alpine National Park must remain cattle free.

[Take action](#)

VNPA information links for this article:

Media release:

<http://vnpa.org.au/page/nature-conservation/media-releases/call-for-federal-intervention-to-halt-march-of-cattle-back-into-the-alpine-national-park>

FAQ sheet—cattle grazing in the alps:

<http://vnpa.org.au/page/publications/fact-sheets/faq-sheet--cattle-grazing-in-the-alps>

Legal advice:

<http://vnpa.org.au/page/nature-conservation/media-releases/legal-advice-confirms-victorian-alpine-grazing-plans-will-need-federal-approval>

TAKE ACTION NOW

Letter to Federal Environment Minister, Tony Burke:

<http://vnpa.org.au/eletter/it%27s-a-park,-not-a-paddock>

Letter to the Victorian Premier, Ted Baillieu:

<http://vnpa.org.au/eletter/our-fragile-alps-are-a-park,-not-a-paddock>

Matt Rucchel
VNPA Executive Director

A SELECTION OF ARTICLES FROM NEWSPAPERS

Gazing into grazing future marks low point for high-country greens



Environmentalist Phil Ingamellis (above) says he has never seen the park flourishing like it is now, and he worries that the return of cattle grazing will affect the flora, including wildflowers growing near Falls Creek. Photo: Simon O'Dwyer

'I haven't seen it looking like this in my lifetime,' says Phil Ingamellis, gazing at the field of Alpine daisies and emerging Billy Buttons and buttercups on a slope of Pretty Valley.

Ingamellis, who runs the Victorian National Parks Association's project on park protection, is keen to show what the alpine plains look like without cattle grazing on them, picking bits from the spongy sphagnum moss beds to show how it holds water and pointing out the way new bog pools are forming within it. He laughs as he confesses how excited he is by peat beds.

It is almost exactly a year since the Victorian Liberal-National Coalition promised to bring cattle back to the Alpine National Park. At the time, there was surprisingly little reaction from environmentalists who had campaigned for many years to get them out. Their resources are thinly spread, Ingamellis says, and the policy did not feature much in the election campaign, particularly in the city where the parks association is based. 'And for a long time,' he adds, 'nobody thought they would get in.'

There is no timetable in place, but the Environment and Climate Change Minister, Ryan Smith, says the government remains committed to the policy. That commitment, however, could turn into a legal face-off between state and federal governments, as the park is now on the National Heritage List.

Grazing was banned from the Alpine National Park in 2005 following an exhaustive investigation by four Labor backbenchers who made up the Alpine Grazing Taskforce, assisted by a scientific advisory panel and reporting to the then environment minister John Thwaites. The panel recommended that even if grazing were to continue in the future, cattle should be kept out of the high country for at least 10 years to allow it to recover from the bushfires of 2003. Moss beds, which are crucial to the dispersal of water across the high plains, would take at least 20 years,

according to the report.

Gazing over the snow plains where cattle grazed until the 2003 fires, Ingamellis points out the thick clumps of green carex grass and a substantial wild celery; both plants, he says, are bovine delicacies.

'Some aspects will recover faster than others,' he says. 'The peat itself may take thousands of years, while the moss may only take a decade, but by taking the cattle off you stop its deterioration. We are losing ecosystems before we understand them; I liken it to a 19th-century understanding of medicine. It's really important to set our monitoring so that in 30 years' time, people will have the tools to manage these things.'

No one could fail to be touched by the valley's grandeur, with sunlight glittering on its streams and a deep silence under the whisper of the wind blowing constantly across the plateau. As the taskforce noted in the covering letter to its report, the two sides in the fight over grazing shared 'common ground in a shared love of the high country'. There is little sense of that common feeling on the website of the vigorous Mountain Cattlemen's Association, which says it is 'ready at a moment's notice' to return to the high country; its correspondents tend to dismiss the VNPA and 'green scientists' as liars.

Professor Peter Attiwill, a principal fellow in botany at the University of Melbourne who says he has a long-standing interest in both cattle farming and the alpine area, has given advice to the Mountain Cattlemen's Association and is cited by them as a credible scientific source. Unlike some of the supporters of the cattlemen, he says he is not critical of the research that formed the background to the former government's decision to stop grazing. 'But I am critical of that decision. Research is one thing; how we use it is another.'

His guiding philosophy, he says, is that natural resources should not be 'locked away' but used with care.

'My main concern is that when we create national parks, it is assumed that everything is now sorted forever, that we have preserved something and we now leave it alone. That is totally wrong: we are still the managers of our ecosystems. But when we create a park, we largely remove management from it.'

The cattlemen had effectively managed the area by keeping tracks open, managing fuel loads with selective burning and keeping down weeds and the numbers of feral animals, he says.

Phil Ingamells agrees that deer and feral horses have proliferated in the absence of the cattle. A survey in 2009 showed that horse numbers throughout the alpine region were growing at over 20 per cent each year; in the Falls Creek resort, locals report seeing more deer on the road than ever before. He sees a need for management too, but not quite as the cattlemen do.

'There is this misconception that when a park is created, it is not managed, but in fact there is more management inside a park than outside it,' he says. 'But it is inadequate. The fundamental thing is to get the funding right and have a management stream and budget dedicated to protecting and managing ecological systems. And at the moment, we don't have that.'

Stephanie Bunbury

The Sunday Age, 9 January 2011, p4

<http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/gazing-into-grazing-future-marks-low-point-for-highcountry-greenies-20110108-19jgr.html>

Grazing returns to high country

Cattle grazing has controversially returned to the Alpine National Park, under the banner of scientific research, after a five-year ban.

Cattle yesterday began to trickle back into the park as part of a six-year study to assess the effectiveness of grazing on reducing bushfire risk in Victoria's high country. About 400 head have been introduced to six sites over 25,600 hectares (3.9 per cent of the park) until the end of the grazing season on April 30.

Grazing was banned from the park in 2005 after a parliamentary taskforce recommended at least a 10-year hiatus to allow native flora to regenerate following the 2003 bushfires.

The National Parks Association is outraged by the return of the cattle, and the potential for full-blown grazing. 'The state government's highly secretive return of cattle grazing to the Alpine National Park is the terrestrial version of Japan's scientific whaling,' spokesman Phil Ingamells said. 'The operation has taken place under a level of secrecy that is quite extraordinary, and appears designed to avoid their clear responsibilities to refer the proposal to the federal government,' he said.

The Coalition promised last January that it would restore grazing to the park, a policy that helped the Nationals' Tim Bull unseat Victoria's only independent, Craig Ingram, in Gippsland East.

Yesterday, the government said the scientific trial fulfilled its election pledge to return grazing.

Mark Coleman, president of the Mountain Cattlemen's Association of Victoria, which had been campaigning for a return since 2005, said it was a great step forward.

The National Parks Association questioned the legality of grazing, saying that under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act any action likely to have a significant impact on a 'matter of national environmental significance' must be referred to federal Environment Minister Tony Burke. The park is on the National Heritage List.

Opposition environment spokeswoman Lisa Neville said it would raise the issue with Mr Burke. 'We need to ensure that proper processes have been followed and that this isn't just a thinly veiled attempt to dress it up as science,' Ms Neville said. 'The Baillieu government promised it would be open and accountable, but they've been caught out reintroducing cattle by stealth,' she said.

The Victorian Department of Sustainability and Environment has written to Mr Burke's office advising it of the trial and has offered a full briefing, but it has received no reply.

But the Federal Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities has not received the letter. 'Under national environment law, the onus to refer an activity falls on the person carrying out the activity,' a spokesman said. 'Any activity likely to have a significant impact on a place protected under national environment law, such as a National Heritage place, must be submitted to the federal Environment Department to see whether federal assessment is needed.'

Richard Willingham

The Age, 13 January, 2011, p 8

<http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/grazing-returns-to-high-country-20110112-19o95.html>

Cattle back in high country

THE Bogong High Plains are being excluded from a trial aimed at clearing the way for cattle to return to the Victorian high country.

The Victorian government yesterday announced a trial had started whereby 400 cattle were introduced to six sites over 25,600 hectares of the Alpine National Park near Mansfield for the remainder of the grazing season. They are the first cattle to enter the high country since the Labor Government banned grazing in 2005.

Environment Minister Ryan Smith confirmed the trial had started after the government campaigned on the return of cattle grazing as a fuel management tool in the lead-up to the November election.

The breakthrough comes on the eve of the Mountain Cattlemen's Association annual get-together at Hinnomunjie Racecourse near Omeo starting tomorrow.

'The Coalition is committed to making transparent and

informed decisions on bushfire management in Victoria's high country based on credible scientific evidence,' Mr

Smith said. 'Current information on the effect of cattle grazing for bushfire mitigation is limited. It will also help us gain a better understanding of the impact of strategic cattle grazing on reducing bushfire risk and on ecological values.' Mr Smith said research sites were selected to avoid environmental impacts, and only areas that have been grazed in the past would be used.

The trial is being undertaken by Professor Mark Adams *** from the University of Sydney and any future decisions on the use of strategic cattle grazing to reduce bushfire risk in the state's high country will be informed by the outcomes of research presently under way.

Mountain Cattlemen's Association president Mark Coleman last night commended the decision by the government. 'In 2005 the Labor government kicked us out of the park for short term political gain,' he said.

Meanwhile, the Victorian National Parks Association has written to federal Environment Minister Tony Burke, calling for him to stop cattle re-entering the park. 'This is a clear challenge to the authority of the federal Environment Minister. The state government is thumbing their nose at Tony Burke,' association executive director Matt Ruchel said.

David Johnston

The Border Mail, 13 Jan, 2011

<http://www.bordermail.com.au>

Cattle are back in Victoria's Alpine National Park ending a controversial five-and-a-half-year ban

Mountain cattlemen said the Coalition Government had delivered on its election promise to allow the reintroduction of cattle to the National Park. An official announcement is expected at this weekend's Mountain Cattlemen's Get Together at Hinnomunjie.

The Weekly Times can exclusively reveal that a group of cattlemen was permitted by Parks Victoria to return small numbers of cattle to fenced areas in the Alpine National Park yesterday.

It will be a tightly controlled reintroduction but mountain cattlemen—who have protested and lobbied tirelessly to have grazing returned to the National Park since the Bracks Government banned it in May 2005—have described the move as a huge windfall.

Former Mountain Cattleman's Association president Christa Treasure said a group of cattlemen and women had spent the past two days fixing fences before the cattle were mustered into the National Park yesterday with horses. 'We just want the whole world to know that cattle are back in the Alpine National Park,' she said. 'It has been a long tough road since the ban and the cattlemen have worked so hard to see it through so to see this day finally come is just fantastic.'

Mrs Treasure said the mountain cattlemen had been told to keep the news under wraps until the stock were in the park to prevent any potential Federal Government injunction.

At the end of last year Federal Environment Minister Tony Burke had warned the Victorian Government that he would have the final say on the reintroduction of cattle to the Alpine National Park.

Victoria's Environment Minister Ryan Smith said cattle had returned to the Alpine National Park under a Government trial of strategic cattle grazing as a tool to mitigate bushfire risk in the high country.

He said the Department of Sustainability and Environment had commissioned an independent scientific research program with 400 cattle this week introduced to six sites over 25,600 hectares, or 3.9 per cent of the Alpine National Park, for the remainder of the 2010-11 grazing season – which runs until April 30.

'The Coalition Government is committed to making transparent and informed decisions on bushfire management in Victoria's high country based on credible scientific evidence,' Mr Smith said. 'Current information on the effect of cattle grazing for bushfire mitigation is limited. Bushfire management is a significant issue in Victoria and this trial will ultimately inform future fire management decisions and ensure an effective approach to environmental management. It will also help us gain a better understanding of the impact of strategic cattle grazing on reducing bushfire risk and on ecological values.'

Mr Smith said research sites were selected to avoid environmental impacts, and only areas that have been grazed in the past would be used. No grazing will occur on Bogong High Plains as part of the trial.

The six-year trial is being conducted by Professor Mark Adams of the Bushfire Cooperative Research Centre and will help DSE to meet its responsibilities under Victoria's National Parks Act to ensure that appropriate and sufficient measures are taken to protect each national park and state park from injury by fire.

'Any future decisions on the use of strategic cattle grazing to reduce bushfire risk in Victoria's high country will be informed by the outcomes of the research,' Mr Smith said. Any decision the government makes on strategic grazing in the future will take into account any potential impact on the environment and community.'

Fiona Sheean

Weekly times, 13 January, 2011

<http://www.weeklytimesnow.com.au>

For a brief profile of Professor Mark Adams see page 4.

BSAR SEARCHES

Search for missing person at Combiobar

5-8 December 2010

A man was reported missing near Combiobar in East Gippsland on Sunday 5 December 2010. BSAR were called to participate in the search with its first group of 14 departing Melbourne at 2am Monday 6 December 2010. After two days of unsuccessful searching by Victoria Police, BSAR, the SES and the DSE, a second group of 15 BSAR members departed Melbourne 2am on Wednesday 8 December, bringing the total BSAR searchers to 29. The BSAR groups searched in and around the Tiger Snake Creek catchment. Peter, the missing person, was located on Wednesday afternoon by a BSAR group. Four other nearby groups converged and provided first aid and support. Police Search and Rescue members arrived with a stretcher and coordinated shifting Peter to a nearby location where he could be safely winched out by the Air Ambulance helicopter. We were lucky with weather; it starting raining heavily just after all search groups had returned from the search.

Peter's sister has passed on her thanks:

All the fantastic volunteers from Bush Search and Rescue Victoria are legends...Words cannot really express the gratitude my family has for you and all the volunteers who dropped everything at a moment's notice to go and search for Peter. Without the BSAR, the Police Search and Rescue, local Gippsland police, Police Operational Response Unit, SES and DSE all coordinating he would not have been found. But special thanks to BSAR because you actually found him. THANK YOU TO ALL THE MEMBERS FROM BSAR WHO WERE PART OF THE SEARCH AT COMBIENBAR. All the best and heartfelt appreciation from Peter's family.

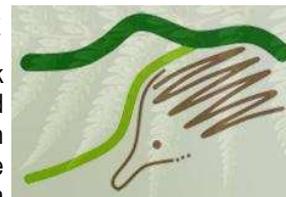
Rescue of injured walker at Eagles Peaks

4 December 2010

A bushwalker was reported injured after a fall near Eagles Peaks, a remote area above the Howqua River, on Friday 3 Dec 2010. BSAR was called out and departed Melbourne at 1:00am on Saturday 4 December 2010. We started our search at about 6am. Fortunately, the weather on Friday was fine and sunny. The injured walker was way down the ridge that descends to Lickhole Gap, in a gully. The previous day's air ambulance had been forced to abandon the rescue due to bad weather, but provided the location coordinates. It was tough going down the ridge, which gets very steep and rocky for the final descent. The Air Ambulance helicopter returned and conducted a dramatic rescue, winching the injured walker and his companion (and their gear) to safety. During this, we kept our distance, as the downdraft from the helicopter can dislodge tree branches and send them down. It was a spectacular rescue and a credit to the flying and rescue skills of the Air Ambulance team. We walked out to 8 Mile Gap and returned to Melbourne

ON THE TRACK

Grand Strzelecki Track



The Grand Strzelecki Track is expected to be completed in March 2011. It is an 85km 3-4 day track linking the Morwell and Turra Bulga NPs. It is divided into sections that also make it suitable for day-walks or shorter pack carries. The track traverses valleys, hills, farmlands, old and regrowth and managed forests. From the hilltops there are views of Bass Strait, South Gippsland and the La Trobe Valley.

There was a competition for the track logo. The winner was Dan Towb.

More information:

- www.grandstzeleckitrack.org.au
- Register for Grand Strzelecki newsletter/Friend of the Grand Strzelecki Track: <http://www.grandstzeleckitrack.org.au/home/register/>

News from DSE

- **Wilson's Promontory:** The access track to Whisky Bay beach is now open.
- **Murrindindi Scenic Reserve:**
 - Murrindindi Scenic Reserve reopened on the Melbourne Cup weekend. The reopening marks the completion of Stage 1 of the \$2.4m Murrindindi Bushfire Recovery Project. The works included the reconstruction of a suspension bridge picnic area and the Blackwood and Cassinia camping areas, where 28 camp sites are available. Further sites are scheduled to reopen early in 2011
 - A further \$270,000 of works will be undertaken to repair and restore several major walking tracks within Murrindindi Scenic Reserve. The Murrindindi River Walk, Boroondara Track, Cascade Walk, Mill Track and the Wilhelmina Falls Walk will be rebuilt.
- **Bunyip State Park:** All but two sites are now open. Lawson Falls picnic area and walking track will remain closed until early 2011.
- **Kinglake National Park** has reopened. The Gums camping area and nearby Island Creek picnic area were officially reopened on October 28. There are now more camp sites than previously; there is car parking for long vehicles, a new toilet block, picnic tables and gas bbqs. The Wombelano Waterfalls and walking tracks are open to visitors.

Tracks information extracted from **Regrowth, Dec 2010** DSE fire recovery newsletter

- **Cattle reintroduced to the Alpine National Park**
For links to more information from the DSE website see page 9.

Grampians Peak Trail

Parks Victoria has moved to start work on the much anticipated long-distance walking trail traversing the length of the Grampians National Park. This project has been a long time coming and one which has been of particular interest to myself and to a number of other Victorian bushwalkers who have talked about just such a walk over the last 20 years or so.

The proposed Grampians Peak Trail will link Mt Zero in the north to the town of Dunkeld in the south. The total distance will be approximately 148km and should take most walkers between 12 and 14 days to complete. The first stage of the Grampians Peak Trail will be to create a three-day walking loop from Halls Gap to a proposed new Rosea Hikers Campground then on to Borough Huts Campground to eventually finish back at Halls Gap. Funds of \$1.6 million were approved by the Victorian Government and announced on 29 June 2010. Walkers will be able to complete sections of the trail, shorter loops or walk the entire distance (known as 'through walkers'). The southern section of the walk will follow the Mt William Range all the way to its end (crossing Yarram Gap) to cross back over to the Serra Range and on to Signal Peak, Mt Abrupt and Mt Sturgeon.

This afternoon I chatted with Graham Parks, District Chief Ranger of the Grampians National Park about the trail. He felt that this was a really exciting concept and that the first stage of the walk would be completed within 2 years or so. Funding after this period should see the entire trail completed within 5 years.

The construction of major new walking trails has largely been forgotten in Victoria, and (partly) due to funding cuts to Parks Victoria many of our best established walking trails are now in various stages of disrepair. This is especially evident in our alpine areas which have had no real trail development for as long as I can remember. Other states such as the Northern Territory (the Larapinta Trail), Queensland (The Fraser Island Great Walk) and Western Australia (the Bibbulmun Track) have recognised the importance that high-quality long-distance walks bring to their tourism industry. It's also worth noting that each of these walks are carefully designed so that sections of the trail can be completed in shorter day stages to cater for the growing numbers of daywalkers.

Probably my greatest concern regarding the Grampians Peak Trail was where it would be routed (especially in the Southern Grampians). I feared that Parks Victoria would take the soft option and use fire-breaks and 4WD tracks to save themselves money and time. I was pleasantly surprised when Graham said that about 60% of the walk would follow newly constructed dedicated walking trails and that the rest of the walk would follow established walking trails (many of which will be substantially upgraded). That means no walking along 4WD tracks. A big tick here. We only have to look at the Great Ocean Walk to see just how a walking trail should NOT be designed. The Great Ocean Walk follows too many

shared-use 4WD tracks and has earned it the unfortunate nickname as the Not So Great Ocean Walk. Long-distance walks require a complete avoidance of all roads and 4WD tracks (except where it is necessary to cross them). It is easy to push walkers along an established 4WD track to save money (instead of constructing a dedicated walking trail) but this only serves to greatly reduce the natural experience that walkers rightly expect. Once the designers of these trails realise that walkers do not want to share their space with vehicles then maybe Victoria will see some better trails constructed. Having talked with Graham today I felt that maybe Parks Victoria have learned from their Not So Great Ocean Walk mistake and that the Grampians Peak Trail will eventually become one of the best long-distance walks in Australia. Keep your fingers crossed.

Open Spaces (Adventure Publishing & Bookshop)
<http://osp.com.au/?p=982#comments-wrap>

Grampians Peak Trail—Victorian Coalition Promise Made during the State Election

A Victorian Liberal Nationals Coalition Government will provide \$1.2 million to extend the popular Grampians Peak Trail, [the then] Shadow Minister for Regional and Rural Development and Leader of The Nationals Peter Ryan said... [Mr Ryan is now the Minister for Environment and Climate Change (ed)]

Making the announcement in Halls Gap with local Nationals Member Hugh Delahunty, Mr Ryan said the Coalition's commitment will put Parks Victoria one step closer to extending the trail to its full 148 kilometres from Mt Zero, through Halls Gap to Dunkeld...

'The Coalition will fund the planning and development of the next stage from Borough Huts through to Lake Bellfield, around Mt William to Mafeking. It will also fund start-up costs and construction of the trail towards Mt William,' Mr Ryan said...

Member for Lowan Hugh Delahunty said the completion of the trail would ensure the Grampians Peak Trail would become one of Victoria's four Wild Walks as identified by Tourism Victoria and would open up the area to a range of bushwalkers wishing to experience the vast grandeur of the Grampians.

'The trail will also be built to protect against bushfires by constructing the track's facilities out of durable materials including stone and steel,' Mr Delahunty said. 'Stage one of the Grampians Peak Trail from Halls Gap to Borough Huts Campground is expected to be completed in the next two years, with the entire trail likely to be completed within five years with appropriate funding...'

Extracted from a media release by **The Nationals for Regional Victoria** (Posted Monday, 15 November 2010)
<http://www.vicnats.com/news/article.aspx?ID=11504>

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Organisations where BWV Members Provide a Bushwalking Perspective

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 River Red Gum reference group: Phil Brotchie
 Outdoor Recreation Centre Committee of Management:
 Chris Towers
 Adventure Activity Standards (AAS) Technical committee:
 Paul Chamings
 Living Links Steering committee: Tony Walker



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