

MEDIA RELEASE



Healthy Parks
Healthy People



Hazardous tree removal a step towards reopening

13 July 2020

Hundreds of burnt and hazardous trees will be removed next month from visitor areas at Cape Conran Coastal Park as part of Parks Victoria's bushfire recovery work.

While some parts of the park have reopened to day visitors, the tree works are necessary to reopen other areas like the Banksia Bluff campground for the September school holidays.

Fire impacted trees pose a significant risk as they can drop their limbs without warning, as they may be dead or severely damaged.

Arborists reports focus on high visitation areas such as walking tracks, roads, the campground and other visitor facilities to plan the works.

Severely damaged trees will be mulched to stabilise the fire affected soil, some will be stacked and burnt during future planned burns, while lesser impacted trees will be pruned.

Outside of visitor areas, fire adapted trees will be left to regenerate to provide habitat for birds and other species.

Plant regrowth and the return of insects offer promising signs of environmental recovery, with reports of wallabies, wombats and lace monitors in the local area.

Future works will focus on planting indigenous vegetation, installing fencing to protect significant areas of revegetation and continuing weed management to stop invasive plants and grasses. Animal monitoring and protection programs will also seek to measure the recovery of native fauna.

The tree removal work is expected to be completed by early September, with operations following strict public health measures to slow the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19).

The works are part of Parks Victoria's state-wide recovery program, which is prioritising visitor safety and rebuilding bushfire damaged infrastructure in parks and reserves.

Quotes attributable to Sue Cutlack, Area Chief Ranger Fire Recovery, East Gippsland:

"The safety of our visitors is our highest priority. Bushfire damaged trees pose a risk to visitors and removing them is an essential step towards safely reopening popular visitor areas in the park, such as the Cape Conran Banksia Bluff cabins and campground."

"Recovery in the park is already underway with many popular day visitor sites open, including the East Cape day visitor area, the Yeerung River beach access point, the Cape Conran Boat ramp at West Cape and Joiners Channel."

"The next step is to install temporary camping facilities for the September school holidays. Cape Conran is a much-loved camping area and we want to reopen it to the public as soon as possible."

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About Parks Victoria

Parks Victoria is a statutory authority of the Victorian Government acting in accordance with the *Parks Victoria Act 2018*. Parks Victoria recognises the value and importance of working in partnership with Traditional Owners to manage parks and reserves in a culturally sensitive and ecologically appropriate way.

Parks Victoria is responsible for managing a diverse estate of more than 4 million hectares including 3,000 land and marine parks and reserves making up 18 per cent of Victoria's landmass, 75 per cent of Victoria's wetlands and 70 per cent of Victoria's coastline. Victoria's parks are home to more than 4,300 native plants and around 1,000 native animal species.

Parks Victoria's estate attracts more than 100 million visits every year and we are committed to providing accessible, enjoyable, diverse programs and destinations while protecting and enhancing environmental and cultural values. It is our primary responsibility to ensure parks are healthy and resilient for current and future generations. For more detail on our strategy and direction, please read our [Corporate Plan 2018-21](#) and [Business Plan 2018-19](#).

We work in partnership with other government and non-government organisations and community groups, catchment management authorities, private land owners, friends groups, volunteers, licensed tour operators, lessees, research institutes and the broader community.

Research suggests spending time in nature improves concentration, learning, problem solving, creativity and has physical and mental health benefits. Parks Victoria developed and named this approach [Healthy Parks Healthy People](#) which recognises the health of nature and the community is interlinked.

Further information about our management responsibilities and activities can be found in our [Annual Report](#).