

# LandLife

GLENELG HOPKINS REGIONAL NEWSLETTER

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## A Year of Achievements

Peter Butcher  
Chief Executive  
Glenelg Hopkins CMA

**With 2009 drawing to a close and Christmas almost with us again, everyone at Glenelg Hopkins CMA is reflecting on the opportunities and challenges presented by the State Government's recent White Paper on Land and Biodiversity.**

But looking back over the last year, I am tremendously pleased to report that there is much of which to be proud.

The year began with our staff and partners tackling the challenges of new Federal and State Governments' funding priorities under the Commonwealth's Caring for our Country and the Victorian Investment Framework.

We were pleased that our CMA received \$2.54 million in 2009/10 Caring for our Country to invest in sustainable agriculture, indigenous natural resource management, protecting native vegetation and wildlife on private property and controlling pests and weeds.

Our CMA staff are to be commended for their resilience and commitment to the environmental work they undertake, and their achievements in partnership with the Glenelg Hopkins community during this sometimes-difficult year.

The year began well for the Glenelg River, with environmental flows released in January to lessen the impact of drought. The environmental flow program is aimed at protecting flora and fauna in a river system under heavy stress from years of successive drought. The fish in the Glenelg were also given much needed attention, with a number of barriers to fish movement removed.

Good news for our iconic river continued throughout 2009, with further environmental flows later in the year, and the introduction of the Crown Frontage Licence Review.

So far through the review, landholders have agreed to renew conditions on 11 licences in the Upper Glenelg River area and protect about 29km and 436ha of Crown frontage, as well as an additional 110ha of other Crown land tenure. This is believed to be among the best outcomes in the State and highlights just how committed so many of our landowners are to environmental values.

The Crown Frontage project ties in with other CMA projects - the Lower Glenelg High Conservation Value Aquatic Ecosystem project, the Woodlands Project and River Tender, allowing us to target areas of priority concern in a cohesive and strategic manner.

We received Federal funding to launch a program titled Recognising Farming Women, which provided workshops for women living on farms and in rural communities, enhancing their leadership and networking skills to better enable them to support their communities.

Our work continues with the Gunditj Mirring Partnership Project, which will enhance the ability of indigenous communities to participate in natural resource management and transfer some of their knowledge to non-indigenous owners. The project will trial Indigenous ecological knowledge and land management practices within the Budj Bim landscape, provide training and deliver a mentoring program.

In addition, over four years, an ecological knowledge and practice extension toolkit will be developed to enable the Gunditjmarra community to provide advice to other land managers, community groups and government agencies.

Glenelg Hopkins



C M A

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## Produced by:

Glenelg Hopkins CMA

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Peter Butcher, Adam Bester, Deborah Howcroft, Jody Chinner, Alissa Rogers, Leonard Cooper, Kerry Cheesman, Lauren Eddy, Una Allender, Luke Sandri and Carolyn Rundell.

LandLife is also available to view at [www.ghcma.vic.gov.au](http://www.ghcma.vic.gov.au)

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This newsletter is produced by Glenelg Hopkins CMA to promote improved management of the region's natural resources. It has been developed as a resource for individuals and organisations interested in natural resource management.

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During the year we were pleased when brother and sister farmers, Kevin Knight and Alice Knight from Pittong right at the top of Mt. Emu Creek, were presented with the 2008 McKell Medal for outstanding achievement to Natural Resource Management.

The McKells have committed their lives to environmental awareness, and represent the many landholders and community members in our catchment who strive to do the same. One of those people is Peter Dark, a Glenelg Hopkins Board Member and Chair who retired this year. Peter has been an outstanding

Chairman, leader and human being. Peter led our CMA through some challenging times with great skill, integrity and humour and the government and community owe him a great debt of gratitude for his long and selfless service.

Mark Wootton, a farmer, and chair of The Climate Institute, took on the role of Chair in July, and welcomed a new Board, which has the combination of natural resources knowledge and strategic experience to guide us through our next phase.

## Recognising Farming Women

Carolyn Rundell

The 'Recognising Farming Women' project was funded through the Department of Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) in June 2009 and is in the final stage of delivery by the Glenelg Hopkins CMA across the region.

The project was established to network rural women farmers, provide peer support, interactive learning opportunities and access to expert information on leadership, managing change, rank, power, decision making, communication and public speaking.

Women came together in an interactive, safe, yet challenging environment in which they could actively practice their learning as it unfolded. The workshops were delivered in Ararat, Yambuk and Lake Bolac.

The two stage workshop program offered women an opportunity to learn skills and reflect upon them in their own homes, workplaces and environments and then to return to the second workshop within 2-3 weeks to share their experiences thus refining their required learning outcomes. 90% of women who participated were from farming families, and a number were sole farmers.

Women from ages 24 to 82 attended and a strong range of backgrounds has been represented, including non-Australian born women, women running a range of non-farming businesses, women with extensive agricultural industry experience and women newly moved to a farming lifestyle.

The workshop-style learning was empowering to the group and the feedback suggests that for many this experience has been life changing in its ability to address issues of power, rank and personal empowerment.

The final workshop dealt in detail with the Peer Support Group formation and necessary skills. It is proving to be a very good framework for reengaging the women with the learnings from the workshops and to provide a gentle form of accountability to continue the work of self awareness, goal setting and time-management.

A mentoring program has developed as a peer mentoring program utilising a process of CV sharing and skills training in active listening and giving feedback.

**Acknowledgements:**  
The current Steering Committee member organisations are:  
[Panyabyr Landcare group](#)  
[Hamilton-Coleraine Rail Landcare group](#)  
[National Centre for Farmer Health](#)  
[RMIT University](#)  
[Southern Farming Systems](#)

# Iconic Brolga features at Eel Festival

Una Allender

**The iconic brolga (*Grus rubicunda*) and its threatened wetland habitat will be the focus of the 2010 Lake Bolac Eel Festival on Saturday March 27.**

Brogas, or Kurront in the Gunditjmara language, are an iconic species of the Victorian western plains. They are also referred to as Native Companions by many older locals who remember seeing large numbers of brogals returning annually to wetlands in the region.

Today, any sighting of brogals is a cause for excitement, especially as the prolonged drought, dwindling wetland habitat and predator threats are making them a vulnerable species. Many landholders are currently participating in the South West Brolga Research Project, recording sightings and taking steps to eradicate foxes.

Inka Veltheim, a PhD student from the University of Ballarat, will outline this research project at the Festival Environmental Forum. Her project aims to investigate key seasonal and local movements of brogals, collect life history information and investigate and describe habitat use to identify key roosting, breeding and foraging habitat areas in the south-west.

Other presenters at the forum will look at brogals and wetlands from a range of perspectives. Speakers will include local wetlands expert Michelle Casanova who will explain the important contribution of wetlands to biodiversity in the region, and Melbourne teacher Karen Johns who will speak on her trip with Earthwatch to the ecologically-fragile Pantanal wetlands in Brazil.

The Festival Twilight Celebration is gaining a reputation as a unique celebration of indigenous culture, the arts and appreciation of the environment and in 2010 the Festival will present "Brolga Dreaming".

Anne Norman, internationally-acclaimed shakuhachi (Japanese flute) player, has been researching and observing brogals in the field. As part of "Brolga Dreaming", she will perform her suite of Brolga Music composed for the Festival, accompanied by violin, cello, didgeridoo and a community choir.

Dancer Susan Taylor, will lead the audience in a brolga dance, dancing along with a pair of giant brolga puppets.



Gunditjmara dancers will perform traditional brolga (kurront) dances, and local indigenous brolga tales will be retold and dramatised around the campfire. The Kikkabush women will return to the lake with Mother Eel and the whole stage-lit celebration will be enlivened with pyrotechnic effects.

The Twilight Celebration is a highlight of a day of live music, art, sculpture, information, workshops, fun and festivity on the banks of Lake Bolac, all underpinned by the Eel Festival themes of concern for the environment, reconciliation and celebration of the Arts.

More information on the Festival can be obtained from the Lake Bolac Information & Business Center on 5350 2204 or the Festival website [www.eelfestival.org.au](http://www.eelfestival.org.au)



Jamie Thomas performed at the 2009 Eel Festival at Lake Bolac. (photo by Rose Howard)

# Glenelg Hopkins CMA welcomes State Government White Paper

Deb Howcroft  
Glenelg Hopkins CMA

The Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority has welcomed the Victorian Government's Land and Biodiversity White Paper in a Time of Climate Change, *Securing Our Natural Future*.

The key change impacting on Victoria's Catchment Management Authorities is the reduction of the existing 10 CMAs to five. The non-metropolitan CMAs have doubled in size.

In south-west Victoria, Glenelg Hopkins CMA and Corangamite CMA will merge to form the new Western Districts Natural Resource and Catchment Authority. The Western Coastal Board will also be brought into the new entity.

Glenelg Hopkins CMA Chair Mark Wootton said the current CMA board believed the announced changes were good news for our rivers, wildlife, native vegetation, sustainable agriculture and communities.

Of the 13 flagship areas identified statewide as priority targets for investment, the new Resource and Catchment Authority has four located within its boundaries, whereas previously some flagship areas were shared across the two CMAs.

Mr Wootton said the new alignments better placed the Western District to coordinate funding bids and important environmental works, particularly across the Volcanic Plains.

The new Authorities will become referral authorities for land use change and forestry carbon offset plantings, meanwhile retaining their existing planning powers.

They will also provide advice to Water Corporations on the impacts of new water use licences on the environmental values of streams, wetlands and aquifers. In addition, they will assist Water Corporations to develop environmentally sound management plans for the consumptive use of surface and ground water.

Addendas to Natural Resource and Catchment Authority Regional Catchment Strategies will clearly identify priority areas within catchments, document a model schedule for Environmental Significance Overlays in Planning Schemes and nominate remnant native vegetation that needs protection and the best locations for new native vegetation plantings.

There will be \$30 million in additional funding made available over three years, beginning in 2010-11 to aid the implementation process and allow the new Natural Resource and Catchment Authorities to gear up quickly to their new roles.

Mr Wootton said the greater size of the new authority and enhanced planning powers outlined in the White Paper, will enable the new Resource and Catchment Authority to provide better service delivery efficiency and improved ability to attract funding.

Glenelg Hopkins CMA Chief Executive Officer Peter Butcher said the White Paper's terms of reference were to set the direction for Victorian Government policy and investment priorities in natural resource management, land health and biodiversity for the next 20 to 50 years.

"In particular we support and look forward to implementing the new, larger, stronger Natural Resource and Catchment Authority," Mr Butcher said.

"We believe the new Western District Authority will be better positioned to deal with climate change issues, such as carbon offset plantings, water resource scarcity, more intense flooding, in a time of expanding population and demands for food security, water, and energy.

"It also makes sense to concentrate catchment and coastal natural resource and climate change planning responsibility in a single regional Authority," Mr Butcher said.

Mr Butcher said the Glenelg Hopkins CMA would continue to ensure the service levels, delivery of programs and accessibility of CMA staff were maintained throughout the transition period, congratulating his staff for their successes with the implementation of State and Federal Government programs this year.

"The Glenelg Hopkins CMA remains as is until the new Natural Resource and Catchment Authorities are established," Mr Butcher said.

"We have made a commitment to share information with our partners, when we receive it, and when we have the appropriate clearances from Government", he said.



Glenelg Hopkins Chair Mark Wootton welcomes the State Government's Land and Biodiversity White Paper

# Fish ladders installed near Sandford

Luke Sandri

Glenelg Hopkins CMA is removing a barrier to fish movement in the Glenelg River, near the junction of the River and Bahgallah Road.

The CMA has identified a number of significant barriers to fish movement within the Glenelg River, and as a result initiated the Fish Barrier Removal Project.

The Project aims to modify or remove barriers to fish passage between the Wannon River and Rocklands Reservoir. This will double the length of river available for fish travelling upstream from the estuary – a distance of 280km. It will also open up another 100km section of river, allowing access for native fish to the valuable refuge pools at Fulhams Bridge and Yat Nat.

Downstream from the Sandford Gauging Station has been identified under the Fish Barrier Removal Project as requiring works to improve fish passage through the construction of a fish ladder.

The works will be timed to coincide with summer low flows, to reduce the impact on local biota and reduce the amount of sediment transported downstream.

Construction will involve placing geofabric and rock immediately downstream of the weir to create a large ramp leading up to the top lip of the weir.

Most fish species cannot sustain fast-paced swimming, and prefer to move in short bursts.

Due to the length of the fish ladder, it is unlikely any fish will be able to swim the entire length in one burst. Therefore, large rocks will create 'resting pools' along the fish ladder to enable fish to recover as they traverse the structure.

The Sandford fish ladder will be constructed at a gradient of 20:1, which is sufficient for migrating fish to traverse.

Studies have shown that some fish are attracted to turbulent water when migrating, so this feature is present in the design of the Sandford fish ladder as water cascades down the rock ramp.



# Woodlands Protection Project

Alissa Rogers

The Caring for our Country funded Woodlands Protection Project has kicked off to a great start. The outcome of this project will be two cross-property plans involving 10 landholders each and a series of workshops and seminars focusing on sustainable farm practices.

Year One is being carried out in the Dartmoor area, starting with 30 people attending the first meeting with landholders in October at the Dartmoor Hotel. The outcome of this evening was very pleasing, with each person offering ideas on workshop topics of interest and most landholders requesting a site inspection to discuss potential projects.

These site visits, conducted during November and December involve meeting the landholder on site, visiting potential fencing, weed control or vegetation corridors and discussing any future plans.

It has been a privilege to meet such a great group of landholders who are welcoming and willing to share their properties and ideas with me. I am enjoying witnessing many sustainable farm practices in action and visiting properties with high quality natural resources, not to mention spectacular views over the Glenelg National Park and surrounds.

The majority of landholders who already had projects in mind usually make the comment "I was going to do it anyway, but if you can help fund it, that would be even better". The main vegetation communities are Herb Rich Foothill Forest, Lowland Forest and Riparian Woodlands.

A Habitat Hectares assessment is conducted at most sites with remnant woodlands to give a score of vegetation quality. At one property, over 23 species of shrubs, herbs and grasses were recorded in a one hectare area.

Year Two of the Woodlands Protection Project is also underway. The first meeting was held in Portland attended by 28 landholders from Portland surrounds, Wattle Hill Creek, Tarragal Landcare and Mt Clay Landcare groups. The objective was to introduce landholders to the incentives available, bring neighbours together, identify possible properties and projects and initiate the planning process. Site visits will commence in these areas in July 2010.

# Farmers wanted for STIPA Native Grass Trials

Jody Chinner

Increased profit through improved yield and sustainability are the expected outcomes of a pilot scheme across the Victorian Volcanic Plains.

In a partnership between Glenelg Hopkins CMA and native grass advocacy association STIPA, local farmers across the state can participate in trials to integrate native grasses into farm management practices.

STIPA CEO, Graeme Hand, says the Native Grass Regeneration Trials are the result of five years of development and refinement through a series of on-farm workshops held with landowners across Victoria and New South Wales.

"We've spent a long time evolving the science of integrating natives grasses into management practices to make sure farmers can easily implement them, at a very low cost," Mr Hand says.

He says the focus is on relatively simple changes to traditional practices that will increase perennality, organic carbon and biodiversity - which he says improves soil function and has positive knock-on effects for productivity and profit generation.

"Farmers who have gone on to use them in their own businesses, in their own environments, have experienced positive results, year-on-year," he says.

Glenelg Hopkins CMA Biodiversity Coordinator, Jody Chinner, anticipates that recorded successes in other regions can be duplicated on a far wider scale.

The trials come at no cost to the farmers who take part. The CMA is funding the trials throughout the Glenelg Hopkins region, through the Federal Government's Caring for our Country.

Interested farmers should contact Graeme Hand on 0418 532 130 or [graeme.hand@bigpond.au](mailto:graeme.hand@bigpond.au)

# Grazing Grassy Wetlands Field Day

Lauren Eddy



Swamp Billy Buttons (*Craspedia paludicola*) found in the Casanova wetland. Photo, Lauren Eddy

Michelle Casanova delivered a fascinating presentation on the importance of temporary wetlands in the landscape and introduced the group to special wetland plants known as 'charophytes'.

Michelle is embarking on a project to collect and identify as many charophyte species as possible to feature in a new book specifically on Australian charophytes. She demonstrated how to collect and preserve charophyte specimens.

Participants visited a wetland at the Casanova property 'Lurnea', that is managed using sheep grazing as an important tool for reducing biomass and providing an important feed resource throughout the drier months.

Fauna species found swimming in the wetland included the prehistoric-looking Shield Shrimp and frog species including Common Froglet (*Crinia signifera*), Ewing's Tree Frog (*Litoria ewingi*), Striped Marsh Frog (*Limnodynastes peroni*) and Pobblebonk (*Limnodynastes dumerili*). Participants were amazed to see so many critters in one wetland!

Flora species found included Freshwater Algae (*Nitella sp.*), Swamp Billy Button (*Craspedia paludicola*), White Purslane (*Neopaxia australasica*), Manna Grass (*Glyceria sp.*)

Swamp Wallaby-grass (*Amphibromus sp.*), Rush (*Juncus sp.*), Dock (*Rumex sp.*), Common Spike-sedge (*Eleocharis acuta*), Willow Herb (*Epilobium sp.*) and Stonecrop (*Crassula helmsii*).

The Casanova wetland provides an important food and habitat resource for a wide variety of fauna resident on site. In an increasingly dry climate and with many wetlands across the district being drained, ploughed and cropped, it is increasingly urgent that we protect and manage wetlands. Michelle also highlighted the need for linkages between wetland habitats to enable movement and dispersal of species.

If you would like to contribute to Michelle's charophyte project by collecting and preserving your own specimens, please contact her on 0400 971 750 or email [amcnova@vic.chariot.net.au](mailto:amcnova@vic.chariot.net.au) to receive a charophyte collector kit and further information.

For information on Trust for Nature or to become involved in the Friends of the Brolga group, please contact Lauren Eddy (Grasslands Project Officer - Glenelg Hopkins) on 0458 111 716 or email [laurene@tfn.org.au](mailto:laurene@tfn.org.au)

Trust for Nature, supported by funding from the Glenelg Hopkins CMA recently held a field day titled Grazing Grassy Wetlands which attracted 32 participants.

The day began with a Friends of the Brolga group meeting where the structure, purpose and goals of the group were discussed. The Friends of the Brolga group will work closely with and be supported by Bird Observation & Conservation Australia (BOCA).

# Glenelg River Licence Holders make a difference to River Health

Adam Bester  
Glenelg Hopkins CMA



Ian, Emelie and Kathy Ross have fenced off Crown Frontages along the Glenelg River

Landholders in the upper Glenelg catchment have made considerable contributions to improvements in the health of the Glenelg River, as the Priority Crown Frontage Licence Review project gathers pace.

The Crown Frontage Licence Review is a partnership between the Department of Sustainability and Environment, Victoria's catchment management authorities and Melbourne Water. It is a statewide project aimed at improving river bank management and waterway health.

Many riparian licence holders have already taken part in the voluntary improvement program across Victoria, which has seen them enjoy reduced licence fees, better control of stock and healthier land.

According to Glenelg Hopkins CMA Waterway and Wetland Health Manager Adam Bester, there has been an unprecedented response to the priority Crown Frontage Licence Review in the upper Glenelg catchment area near Balmoral.

"So far landholders have agreed to renew conditions on 11 licences in this area and protect about 29km and 436ha of Crown frontage, as well as an additional 110ha of other Crown land tenure. In return landholders have received incentives for fence construction and in some cases off-stream watering and revegetation.

Once the projects are complete they will also receive reduced licence fees for the Crown frontage.

Dr Bester said the participation "would have to be one of the highest uptakes we have had with the CMA".

Two Glenelg Hopkins landholders in particular have agreed to protect a considerable amount of Glenelg River Crown frontage near Balmoral.

One landholder has already commenced fencing off four licences with an area of 141ha of Crown frontage and another 110 ha of additional Crown land. The other landholder, Ian Ross, will protect five licences constituting an area of 191ha.

Mr Ross said there were a number of reasons why he agreed to fence off the Crown frontages.

"I have been here all my life. I have seen the decline and I have seen the impact of the drought. What you see here are the last of the remnant trees. This is a beautiful part of the Glenelg River and we need to provide protection from stock."

"Taking up the CMA incentives and fencing out the stock will provide community benefit; people camp in the area, the diversity of the birds and wildlife will increase and the recreational fishing will be improved," Mr Ross said.

Mr Ross urged landholders with Crown frontage licences to consider taking part in the project.

"Landholders should take advantage of the CMA offers now. They need to realise that incentives don't always last and that they should use the opportunities while they are there," he said.

Of the 630 riparian licences in the Glenelg-Hopkins CMA region, this project affects 116 licences that need to be updated to reflect improved management and up to 55 this year on priority riparian land whose licence-holders can choose whether to participate.

There have been 116 landholders who have improved their land management over the last 10 years under existing partnership projects with the CMA right across the Glenelg-Hopkins region.

These landholders are currently not being rewarded for the good work they have done in fencing and revegetation works on Crown frontages, but they will be offered an opportunity to review their licence conditions so they can receive reduced licence fees.

Landholders who have also undertaken protection of Crown frontages under other funding sources or through their own protection works, can also renew their licence conditions.

Three areas are currently being directly targeted due to their high waterway value but also due to the availability of funding in these areas which enables landholders to fence off these frontages and undertake other restoration works.

These areas include the Upper Glenelg River near Balmoral, Lower Glenelg/Lower Crawford Rivers and the Lower Hopkins River/Lower Mt Emu Creek between Framlingham and Panmure. Over the next four years it is hoped that other priority areas in the Glenelg-Hopkins region can be targeted for this review.

If you would like further information about the review please contact the Glenelg-Hopkins Catchment Management Authority on (03) 5571 2526.

# Farmers rated acceptable by DairySAT

Rick Bayne

Dairy farmers in Western Victoria are performing at acceptable or above industry standards in environmental management, a new survey has found.

The survey was part Dairy Self Assessment Tool (DairySAT) project. The results mark the first in-depth analysis of farmer responses to the DairySAT program in Western Victoria.

WestVic Dairy facilitator for DairySAT, Peter Wearne, said the program helped farmers improve their environmental management. "The results show that about 30 per cent of natural resource management actions on

participating farms is considered to be above acceptable industry practice, which is a good outcome," Mr Wearne said.

Farmers highlighted effluent management, control of farm wastes and nutrient management as their strongest areas.

The vast majority of farms were considered to be operating at least at acceptable environmental management levels or better.

The main area identified as needing improvement was biodiversity, with just over 20 per cent of farmers listing it as in need of enhancement.

DairySAT reviews areas such as effluent management, farm waste, irrigation, chemical use, air and energy, soils, nutrients, pests and weeds, biodiversity and greenhouse gas emissions.

The DairySAT project is jointly funded by Glenelg Hopkins CMA and WestVic Dairy.

# Gunditjmara celebrate IPA Declaration

Thomas Day Jnr,  
Gunditjmara Traditional Owner

The Gunditjmara people celebrated the declaration of one of their properties near Heywood as an Indigenous Protected Area in November.

The property, known as Kurtonitj is the second declared IPA for the Gunditjmara, with another property Tyrendarra already being declared. Kurtonitj, which consists of 350ha, is situated at Homerton with the Darlots Creek forming the western border.

This day was seen by many as an important day for Traditional Owners working positively with government departments to fulfill the aspirations of declaring aboriginal-owned properties as IPAs.

Kurtonitj become the 35th declared IPA in Australia, in a program that has been running for 12 years. The Kurtonitj declaration was made also during the Southern Australia IPA Managers Conference, which was held on Gunditjmara country.

This gave an opportunity for other IPA groups from Australia to witness the event and to also see first hand the work that has been done protecting these areas by the Winda Mara Land Management team, the Budj Bim Rangers.



Damein Bell, Lake Condah Sustainable Development Project Manager, Aunty Amy Saunders, Gunditjmara Elder, Aunty Eileen Alberts, Gunditjmara Elder and Bruce Rose, Director of Indigenous Protected Areas, Department of Environment, Heritage, Water & Arts unveil the IPA Declaration. Photo by Leonard Cooper

# Improved Protection for Marine Mammals

The Victorian Government has introduced new regulations to better protect whales, dolphins and seals in Victorian waters.

The Department of Sustainability and Environment's Manager of Wildlife Management, Ron Waters said Wildlife (Marine Mammals) Regulations 2009 came into force on December 1, 2009.

"The aim of these regulations is to balance the conservation needs of whales, dolphins and seals while making sure Victorians have opportunities to see and interact with these wonderful animals," Mr Waters said.

Some of the key regulations include:

- Recreational boaters must remain 100m away from dolphins and 200m from whales, except if approached
- Licensed tour operators can approach up to 50m of a dolphin and 100m of a whale
- High impact vessels like jet skis must remain 300m away from whales and dolphins
- People must keep a distance of 30m from a seal on a beach
- Swimmers must not approach within 50m of a whale or 30m of a dolphin
- Aircraft including helicopters must fly at least 500m above a whale or dolphin.

"These regulations ensure that marine mammal tourism is able to give people opportunities to view and enjoy these magnificent animals, without jeopardising their long-term survival," Mr Waters said.

"They have been developed in consultation with the coastal tourism industry, tour operators, boating and fishing groups and scientists.

For more information on the new regulations, visit the Department of Sustainability and Environment's website, [www.dse.vic.gov.au](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au) or call 136 186.

# Dundas Tableland Revisited

A reflection of two decades' work attracted 45 people to hear from a selection of respected scientists and researchers who had undertaken research in relation to soils and water on the Dundas Tablelands over the last 20 years.

Peter Dalhaus spoke of the geological history of the Dundas and Erica Nathan explained her research into the vegetation changes due to indigenous use and European settlement.

Dr John Fawcett's research examined the nature of salinity on the Dundas which challenged salinity models from other areas of Australia.

Researchers have been trying to regionally validate the accepted national model of dryland salinity, on which the Glenelg Hopkins CMA Salinity Strategy is based.

At the forum some of the researchers and academics reported collectively on their findings and attempted to draw together some sort of regional synthesis:

- There is no evidence to support the validity of the national dryland salinity model in the Dundas Tableland

- There is abundant evidence from the studies conducted in the Dundas Tableland that confounds the national dryland salinity model
- Specifically, there is no evidence to support the proposal that planting deep-rooted vegetation in Dundas Tableland aquifer recharge zones has reduced, or will reduce, dryland saline discharges
- The national dryland salinity model only seems to work in the West Australian wheat belt and the Murray Darling Basin.

Dr Dalhaus said he was not aware of any evidence to support the national dryland salinity model south of the Great Divide in Victoria. The CMA is seeking the compilation of a summary document of all studies, including a more formal summary of the conclusions.

The event was organised by the Bulart Land Management Group and funded through the Glenelg Hopkins CMA Second Generation Landcare Grants.

## Glenelg Hopkins CMA Annual Report

The Glenelg Hopkins CMA Annual Report has been tabled in Parliament and is available to view at the CMA website [www.ghcma.vic.gov.au](http://www.ghcma.vic.gov.au)

This year the CMA decided to save financial resources and the consumption of resources required to publish an Annual Report and produce a web-based report. There is the requirement to print 80 copies only, to be tabled in State Parliament.

A limited number of extra Annual Reports have been printed and are available to anyone wishing to receive a hard copy version.

# Funding for 'Our Coast'

The Federal and State Governments, along with Glenelg Hopkins CMA, have launched a funding initiative directed at our coastline.

Funding is available to individuals and groups along the coast through 'Our Coast' - a funding initiative which aims to engage individuals and coastal communities in the protection and enhancement of critical coastal assets by completing projects involving on-ground works.

Projects will focus on the protection and enhancement of high priority assets such as estuaries, lagoons, critical habitat and remnant vegetation.

Opportunities are available for landholders and community groups for coastal asset protection, wetland fencing, revegetation, weed inspection and treatment.

Steps to become involved begin with contacting the CMA and registering your interest, followed by an on-site visit and planning discussions with a CMA Project Officer and submitting an application.

Individuals and groups who may be interested are encouraged to contact Jarred Obst or Kerry Cheeseman at Glenelg Hopkins CMA on 5571 2526 to discuss how we can work together to protect our region's coastline.

## CMA Advisory Groups Induction

Glenelg Hopkins CMA welcomed members of the CMA's two new Advisory Groups at induction workshop on November 13.

CMA Chair Mark Wootton and executive staff briefed Advisory Group members on key aspects of their respective portfolios.

The Groups will meet a minimum of four times a year. Michael Leeming has been appointed chair of the Wetland and River Health Advisory Group and Rod Marshall chairs the Biodiversity and Land Health Advisory Group.

Communication between the Advisory Groups and Board will be enhanced with the appointment of Directors John Sherwood and Mike Wagg as observers on each group.



## Diary Dates 2010

Jan 17 Fitzroy River mouth to Surry River mouth Fun Run

Feb 1 The Art of Natural History Art Exhibition, Portland PAC

Feb 2 World Wetlands Day

Feb 11 LandLife Articles Due

Feb 11 & 12 Hamilton Beef Expo

Feb 17 Sungold Field Days

Mar 7 to 13 Ground Water Awareness Week

24 Mar VIF submissions due

27 Mar Lake Bolac Eel Festival



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