

Media Release

The Hon Lisa Neville MP
Minister for Police
Minister for Water



Saturday, 15 September 2018

NEW WYE RIVER CFA STATION BENEFITING THE WHOLE COMMUNITY

The Wye River and Otway communities affected by the 2015 Christmas Day bushfire will benefit from a range of recovery works funded by the Andrews Labor Government.

Minister for Water Lisa Neville officially opened the upgraded CFA station at Wye River this afternoon and met community representatives to announce further funding of \$3.4 million to other critical works in the area.

The \$700,000 station upgrade was funded by community groups, CFA and the Government. It has not only benefited the brigade, but local community groups, organisations and members.

The new investment will fund a program of works in the community, identified by the Wye Sep Kennett Renewal Association to deliver upgraded infrastructure, walking tracks, campsites, conservation programs and visitor experience opportunities.

The funding will enable:

- Construction of the 4.3 kilometre Jamieson Creek to Separation Creek Walking Track
- Upgrades to the Jamieson Creek campsite
- Upgrades to the Sheoak Falls Walking Track
- Weed and pest management to protect areas of high environmental value and community significance
- Completion of the Otway Bioscan, to profile the local biodiversity of the area
- Minor upgrades to Artillery Rocks and Godfreys Grave.

Projects will start in November and are scheduled to be completed in 2020. Local businesses and workers will be used wherever possible.

Ms Neville also announced a feasibility study to investigate the creation of a longer-distance trail through the connection of shorter walking tracks between Apollo Bay and Torquay.

The \$300,000 study, funded by the Labor Government, will consider the opportunities and impacts of linking shorter tracks, and the potential economic and tourism benefits for coastal towns and the broader region.

A project control group has been established, chaired by the Hon Steve Bracks AC, to provide oversight and direction for the study. It will incorporate feedback from community, traditional owners, businesses and other stakeholders, and technical expertise from local and state government, and other government agencies.

The feasibility study is expected to be completed by the end of 2018.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Water Lisa Neville

“The new station is a great community asset for CFA members and the community alike.”

“This investment is so important for the Wye River, Separation Creek and Kennett River communities. It funds projects identified by the local communities and is another step in their recovery from the 2015 bushfires.”

“Better connection between walking trails will boost economic activity along the Great Ocean Road.”

Media contact: Elisa Fernandes 0438 021 203 | elisa.fernandes@minstaff.vic.gov.au

Quotes attributable to Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio

"The Otway Bioscan will create opportunities for community participation in the collection of data that adds to our understanding of biodiversity in the Great Otway National Park."

"The recovery of the environment is important to the local community and the conservation of the region."

Quotes attributable to Co-Chairs of the Wye Sep Kennett Renewal Association Paul Greene & Joanne Tyler

"Our community developed a renewal plan to guide its recovery from the bushfire, and it is great to see it used this time to support the local economy and tourism."

"We appreciate the commitment of government to the recovery of our fire impacted community, and support for walking tracks to showcase the remarkable beauty of our coast"