

# River Red Gum Forests Investigation

## INFORMATION SHEET

### Camping and recreation

River Red Gum forests and wetlands are important environmental and ecological resources. They are also an extremely popular destination for many people interested in outdoor recreation, particularly camping with open fires, fishing, horse riding, four-wheel-driving, motorbike riding and boating.

VEAC has listened to the public's concerns about its draft proposals and has changed the final recommendations, particularly in relation to dispersed camping. The major concern about restrictions on dispersed camping has been addressed. Dispersed camping is recommended as the predominant and continuing use across all riverine parks and state forest areas.

The key recommendations are as below (see also table on page 2):










- **Dispersed camping** (independent camping at self-selected sites, without facilities) will remain the main form of camping in riverine national parks and regional parks, the Murray River Park and state forests
- **Camping with dogs** is permitted in the Murray River Park and regional parks – covering about 80% of currently available River Murray frontage. VEAC has also changed its draft proposals to provide additional areas for camping with dogs at: Wallpolla Island west of Mildura; Torrumbarry Weir area, Barmah and Shepparton area. Camping with dogs is not permitted in national parks
- **Campfires** are permitted in all parks except during the high fire danger period, usually November to March. This aligns Victoria with fire policies along the River Murray in New South Wales and South Australia
- **Firewood collection** for campfires is permitted in all river frontage parks. Land managers will direct where this can occur in order to maintain an ecologically viable level of coarse woody debris or fallen timber for fauna habitat
- **Camping in narrow river frontages** of less than 100 metres wide is permitted where adequate arrangements can be made for human waste disposal and there are no safety concerns. This will be determined by the land manager
- **Designated campsites** (sites determined by the land manager, generally with basic facilities) **and remote campsites** (access on foot or by boat) will be established in limited locations
- **Horse riding** on roads and tracks is generally permitted in all parks. Camping with horses is permitted in the Murray River Park and regional parks.

VEAC also recommends that land managers prepare a recreation and camping strategy, in consultation with the local community, user groups, tourism bodies and local government, to complete the detailed planning for the above recreation uses, which should also address the management of rubbish and vehicle access requirements.

Recreation and tourism on public land is centred on the park areas. Recreational camping, boating, fishing, horseriding, car touring and nature study are important uses that make a major contribution to the region's economy. As a result of VEAC's recommendations, visits to the new parks are predicted to increase over time, as has been shown with the creation of other national parks such as the Grampians, Murray-Sunset and Yarra Ranges national parks.

## Main recreational uses of public land and where each activity may occur

The table should be read in conjunction with the descriptions on page 1.

Activity	National Parks	Murray River Park	Regional Parks	State Forest
 Dispersed camping	✓ <sup>1</sup>	✓	✓	✓
 Dogs	✗	✓	✓	✓
 Car touring and four wheel driving	✓ <sup>2</sup>	✓ <sup>2</sup>	✓ <sup>2</sup>	✓ <sup>2</sup>
 Campfires and firewood collection	✓ <sup>3</sup>	✓ <sup>3</sup>	✓ <sup>3</sup>	✓ <sup>3</sup>
 Fishing	✓	✓	✓	✓
 Boating	✓	✓	✓	✓
 Horse riding	✓ <sup>2</sup>	✓ <sup>2</sup>	✓ <sup>2</sup>	✓ <sup>2</sup>
 Trail bike riding	✓ <sup>2</sup>	✓ <sup>2</sup>	✓ <sup>2</sup>	✓ <sup>2</sup>
 Recreational hunting	✗ <sup>4</sup>	✗ <sup>4</sup>	✗ <sup>4</sup>	✓ <sup>5</sup>

1 Riverine parks

2. On formed roads and tracks

3 Solid fuel campfires not allowed during the high fire danger period (including those using wood and charcoal; gas and liquid fuel stoves allowed)

4 Not allowed except as part of a formal pest animal control program and/or for traditional Aboriginal cultural purposes

5. Hunting also permitted in 23 wildlife areas (state game reserves), state forest, certain public land water frontages and water storage lakes

National Parks include: Murray-Sunset, Hattah-Kulkyne, Leaghur-Koorangie, Gunbower, Lower Goulburn River, Barmah and Warby Range-Ovens River National Parks

Regional Parks and Other Parks include: Shepparton Regional Park, Kerang Regional Park, Kings Billabong Park, Murray-Kulkyne Park, Nyah-Vinifera Park, and Gadsen Bend Park

State Forest includes Gunbower, Benwell and Guttram State Forests