

All submissions will be treated as public documents and will be published on VEAC's website. The name of each submitter will be identified as part of each published submission, but personal contact details will be removed before publishing. Confidential submissions are discouraged. If there are exceptional circumstances that require confidentiality, please contact VEAC before making your submission.

What information should be included in my submission?

You can include as much or as little information as you wish in your submission. You may have a broad opinion about the investigation topic, or about one or more of the nine parks specified in the terms of reference, and VEAC welcomes those comments. You may also wish to let VEAC know what you believe the major issues are for it to take into account in this investigation.

VEAC is also interested in more detailed information you may wish to share about sites or areas in any of the nine specified parks that are of particular interest to you, from recreational prospecting, other recreational use, or environmental or cultural points of view.

If you visit the parks now, are there sites or locations that are important to you for your recreational or other activities?

If you have an interest in recreational prospecting in the parks in the future, are there particular sites that are important to you?

Are there management issues you wish to draw to VEAC's attention in relation to your interest in or current or future use of a particular park, such as access?

All submissions will be taken into account by VEAC in the preparation of its final report to the Minister.

Further information

Additional information is available from VEAC's website at www.veac.vic.gov.au to assist you in making a submission, including answers to frequently asked questions and links to websites with useful information.

Information sheets and maps for each park will also be available on VEAC's website. Please feel free to mark up these maps and include in your submission if this assists you in sharing information with VEAC about particular sites or locations within the parks. Contact VEAC if you require hard copies to be sent to you.

What is the Victorian Environmental Assessment Council?

The Victorian Environmental Assessment Council (VEAC) was established in 2001. It provides the State Government of Victoria with independent advice on protection and management of the environment and natural resources of public land. The five Council members are: Hon. Phil Honeywood (Chairperson), Mr Ian Harris, Dr Charles Meredith, Mr Ian Munro PSM and Ms Angela Reidy. VEAC has established an independently-chaired Community Reference Group (CRG) for the investigation to provide advice to the Council. See VEAC's website for CRG membership.

Contact details

Victorian Environmental Assessment Council
PO Box 500
East Melbourne, Victoria 3002
Phone (03) 9637 9902 or 1800 134 803 (toll-free Australia wide from landlines)

www.veac.vic.gov.au



Investigation into additional prospecting areas in parks

Submissions are invited until Monday 18 February 2013

On 25 October 2012, the Minister for Environment and Climate Change, the Hon. Ryan Smith, requested VEAC to conduct an investigation into additional prospecting areas in parks.

The investigation into additional prospecting areas in parks will include one submission period with a final report to be provided to the Minister by 30 April 2013.

The purpose of the investigation is to make recommendations on which areas (in general terms) of the following parks could be made available for recreational prospecting:*

Alpine, Baw Baw, Croajingolong, Errinundra, Lake Eildon, Lind, Mitchell River and Yarra Ranges national parks and Lerderderg State Park. A map is provided on the other side of this information sheet.

The full terms of reference are available at www.veac.vic.gov.au. A Notice of Investigation was published on Friday 14 December 2012. Written submissions are now invited from interested groups and individuals for consideration by VEAC in developing its final report to the Minister. Submissions close on Monday 18 February 2013.

*Prospecting means searching for minerals or gemstones under a Miner's Right or a tourist fossicking authority as defined in the *Minerals Resources (Sustainable Development) Act 1990*. It involves using non-mechanical hand tools, such as metal detectors, picks, shovels, and gold pans.

Why should I make a submission?

VEAC wants to hear about what is important to you. What do you value about the parks specified in the terms of reference? What do you think are the major issues? VEAC is also keen to hear about any information you may have that you would like to share with us for the investigation. All submissions will be taken into account by VEAC in the preparation of its final report to the Minister.

This is the only submission period for the investigation, so it is important to have your say now.

How do I make a submission?

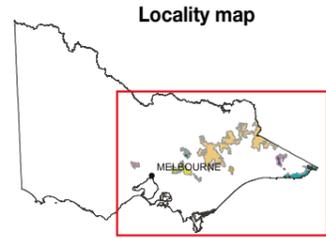
You may make an online submission via VEAC's website at www.veac.vic.gov.au or send your written submission to VEAC by post or by email (see contact details on the back page). Only submissions sent directly to VEAC will be treated as submissions. All submissions will be acknowledged, so please contact VEAC if you have not received an acknowledgment within two weeks to ensure your submission has been received.

There is no required format for submissions, except that you must provide your name and your contact details, including an email address if you have one.

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Go to www.veac.vic.gov.au for more information to help you make a submission or call VEAC on **1800 134 803** toll free

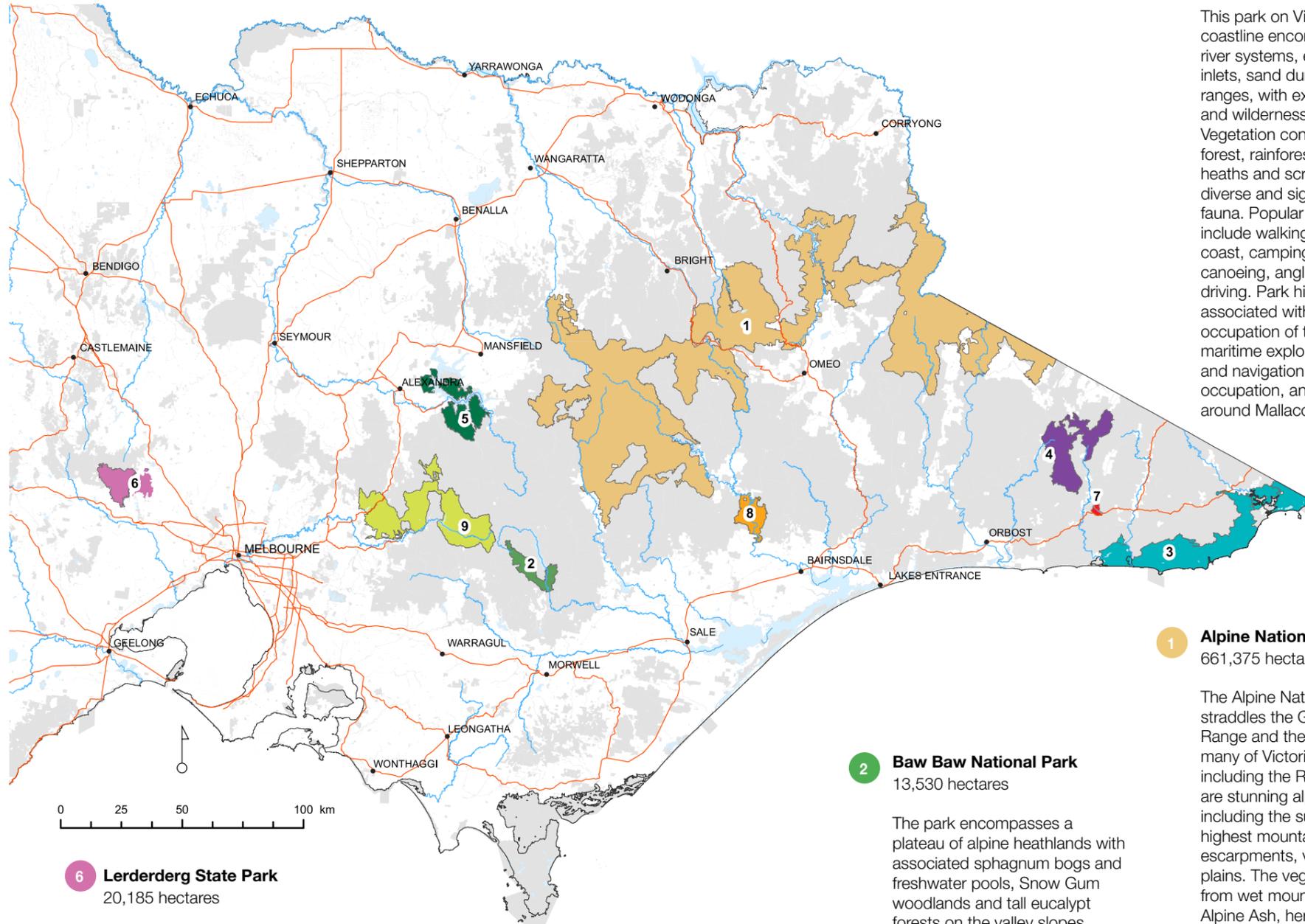
Investigation into additional prospecting areas in parks



Public land
Road
Waterway

9 Yarra Ranges National Park 77,190 hectares

Cradling the Yarra River headwaters and much of Melbourne's water supply catchment, the park features majestic old growth Mountain Ash forests, ancient rainforests, alpine environments, mountain ridges and waterfalls. There are flora and fauna of state and national significance including Leadbeater's Possum (Victoria's mammal emblem). Recreation activities include walking, picnicking, nature study, car touring, cross-country skiing, angling, cycling, rock climbing and hang gliding. Access is not permitted to a large part of the park to protect water supply catchments. The history of the park includes tourism, timber harvesting, water supply and goldmining in the Warburton and Reefton areas.



6 Lerderderg State Park 20,185 hectares

This densely forested park is dominated by the Lerderderg River, which has cut a 300 metre deep gorge through sandstone and slate, almost bisecting the park. Vegetation types range from drier box-ironbark and stringybark forest to taller messmate peppermint and gum forests. Picnicking, walking, including overnight walks in the gorge, nature study, camping and four-wheel driving are popular activities. Access is limited by topography and much of the river gorge is accessible only on foot. There is a history of Aboriginal occupation and goldmining associated with the Blackwood gold rush.

5 Lake Eildon National Park 27,750 hectares

The park comprises rugged hills with open woodlands through to dense forests, surrounding Lake Eildon. There are flora and fauna of state and national significance, including the Regent Honeyeater and Spot-tailed Quoll. Recreation activities include camping, boating associated with Lake Eildon, walking, cycling, four-wheel-driving, angling and seasonal deer stalking. Historic sites reflect the area's pastoral and goldmining past as well as the construction of the lake.

2 Baw Baw National Park 13,530 hectares

The park encompasses a plateau of alpine heathlands with associated sphagnum bogs and freshwater pools, Snow Gum woodlands and tall eucalypt forests on the valley slopes. Significant flora and fauna species include Leadbeater's Possum and the Baw Baw Frog. Recreation activities include bushwalking, camping, cross-country skiing, white water rafting, horseriding, seasonal deerstalking, cycling and angling. Road access is generally restricted due to topography and many tracks are four-wheel drive only. Historically, sections of the park have been used for grazing, goldmining, timber harvesting and tourism.

3 Croajingalong National Park 88,500 hectares

This park on Victoria's far-eastern coastline encompasses coastal river systems, embayments and inlets, sand dunes and coastal ranges, with extensive remote and wilderness environments. Vegetation consists of eucalypt forest, rainforest, and coastal heaths and scrubs; supporting a diverse and significant flora and fauna. Popular recreation activities include walking the wilderness coast, camping, boating and canoeing, angling and four-wheel driving. Park history is particularly associated with Aboriginal occupation of the coastal fringe, maritime exploration, shipwrecks and navigation, pastoral occupation, and goldmining around Mallacoota.

4 Errinundra National Park 39,870 hectares

This park supports outstanding old-growth mountain forests of Shining Gum and stands of both cool temperate and warm temperate rainforest that are essentially undisturbed and have been unburnt for generations. It encompasses the Errinundra Plateau, the granite peak of Mt Ellery and the headwaters of seven river systems. Access is fairly restricted, being weather dependent, and is seasonally closed. Walking, nature study and four-wheel driving are the main recreation uses. There are historical associations with Aboriginal ancestral trails and ceremonial practices, and European associations with settlement, grazing and goldmining.

1 Alpine National Park 661,375 hectares

The Alpine National Park straddles the Great Dividing Range and the headwaters of many of Victoria's major rivers including the River Murray. There are stunning alpine landscapes, including the summits of Victoria's highest mountains, waterfalls and escarpments, valleys and high plains. The vegetation ranges from wet mountain forests of Alpine Ash, herb-rich alpine plains and bogs, Snow Gum woodlands and drier forests. There are flora and fauna species of great significance, including the Mountain Pigmy Possum. Recreation activities include camping, four-wheel driving, bushwalking, nature study, cross-country skiing, angling, cycling and seasonal deerstalking. There are numerous access roads, many of which are seasonally closed. The park has a rich history of Aboriginal use (including harvesting of Bogong Moths), and European history - including summer grazing runs, goldmining associated with many early gold rushes, water supply, power generation and timber harvesting.

7 Lind National Park 1,370 hectares

One of Victoria's oldest and smallest national parks, surrounded by large areas of state forest. Lind protects a range of forest communities, including significant areas of warm temperate rainforest. Recreational use of the park is minimal and focussed on the Euchre Valley Nature Drive, which bisects the park. Aboriginal use of the area is evidenced by numerous artefacts. There are also shafts and relics reflecting its mining history.

8 Mitchell River National Park 14,250 hectares

A major feature is the Mitchell River, with its rugged deep and remote gorge and fringing rainforest. Eucalypt forests cover much of the park with remnant areas formally cleared for grazing along the northern stretches. Recreation includes camping, bushwalking, nature study, horseriding, whitewater canoeing and rafting, four-wheel driving and seasonal deerstalking. European history is associated with grazing runs, water supply and goldmining, particularly in the Tabberabbera area in the north. The park is jointly managed with the Gunaikurnai people and will be granted as Aboriginal title.