

Victorian  
Environmental  
Assessment  
Council

# Assessment of early government-accepted LCC recommendations Supplementary Report

January 2024



### **Victorian Environmental Assessment Council**

The Victorian Environmental Assessment Council (VEAC) was established in 2001 under the *Victorian Environmental Assessment Council Act 2001*. It provides the State Government of Victoria with independent advice on protection and management of the environment and natural resources of public land.

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**Assessment of early  
government-accepted  
Land Conservation Council  
recommendations**

**Supplementary Report**

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## **Acknowledgement of Aboriginal Victorians**

The Victorian Environmental Assessment Council acknowledges and respects Victorian Traditional Owners as the original custodians of Victoria's land and waters, their unique ability to care for Country and deep spiritual connection to it. We honour Elders past and present whose knowledge and wisdom has ensured the continuation of culture and traditional practices.

We are committed to genuinely partner, and meaningfully engage, with Victoria's Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities to support the protection of Country, the maintenance of spiritual and cultural practices and their broader aspirations in the 21st century and beyond.

Published by the Victorian Environmental Assessment Council  
2 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne, Victoria, 3000  
January 2024  
Also published on [veac.vic.gov.au](http://veac.vic.gov.au)

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ISBN 978-1-76136-528-7 (pdf/online/MS word)

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# 1. Introduction

In September 2022, the Victorian Environmental Assessment Council (VEAC) was requested by the then Minister for Environment and Climate Action, the Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP, to undertake an assessment of early government-accepted Land Conservation Council (LCC) recommendations.

The Council submitted its report to the Minister for Environment Ingrid Stitt MP on 5 June 2023. Fourteen early LCC investigations have areas with government-accepted public land use recommendations that have not been later reviewed. The report included a summary of the area together with the extent of the main public land use categories and those excluded or included in this assessment. Detailed assessment reports were provided for seven of 14 early LCC investigations.

This supplementary report provides detailed assessment reports for the remaining seven early LCC investigations. For context this report repeats some material from the report submitted in June 2023 (the June report).

Information has predominantly been sourced from LCC/ECC reports and from the VEAC's spatial dataset of formal government land use decisions, VEACRecs25. Box 1 in the June report describes the VEACRecs25 dataset. There have been some minor changes to the extent of some public land uses compared to the June report due to subsequent information improvements, especially improvements to the LCC investigation area boundaries along the coastline.

Original LCC, ECC and VEAC reports are publicly available through the VEAC website, with all published LCC and ECC reports available in the digital archive.

## 1.1 Terms of reference

The Minister's terms of reference are included in box 1 and summarised as follows:

This request was for an assessment of the status of government-accepted public land use recommendations made by the LCC between 1973 and 1983, including to:

- (a) identify government-accepted public land use recommendations that require review, and
- (b) identify government-accepted public land use recommendations that have been superseded by subsequent government policy decisions.

The request does not extend to recommending changes in public land use.

In accordance with the terms of reference the assessment excludes government-accepted recommendations for national parks, state parks, wilderness parks, regional parks and state forests.

### Box 1 Terms of reference

Pursuant to section 26B of the *Victorian Environmental Assessment Council Act 2001*, the Minister for Environment and Climate Action hereby requests the Victorian Environmental Assessment Council (the Council) to carry out an assessment of government-accepted public land use recommendations, in relation to particular areas of land, made by the former Land Conservation Council between 1973 and 1983 and which have not been subsequently reviewed. The assessment does not include government-accepted public land use recommendations for national parks, state parks, wilderness parks, regional parks and state forests (including recommendations for areas for hardwood production and uncommitted land).

The purpose of the assessment is to:

- (a) identify government-accepted public land use recommendations that require review
- (b) identify government-accepted public land use recommendations that have been superseded by subsequent government land use decisions.

The assessment supports the current reforms to public land legislation by identifying land use recommendations that require review to ensure the proposed transition to public land management categories, as recommended in the Council's *Statewide Assessment of Public Land Final Report* (2017), is based on current and appropriate government-accepted recommendations for public land use categories.

This request is for an assessment and report on the status of government-accepted public land use category recommendations, including a rationale for why a review is required. It does not extend to recommending changes to public land use, and public consultation is not required.

The Council must report on its assessment of the matters specified in paragraphs (a) and (b) above within nine months from the date of the request.

## 2. Supplementary detailed assessment reports

Detailed assessment reports are provided for the area of remaining public land use recommendations from seven early LCC investigations.

Electronic links are provided here to VEAC's digital archive for the relevant investigations.

- [Alpine Area Special Investigation \(1983\)](#)
- [Gippsland Lakes Hinterland Area \(1983\)](#)
- [South Gippsland Area District 1 \(1973\)](#)
- [South Gippsland Area District 2 \(1982\)](#)
- [North-Eastern Area Districts 3, 4 and 5 \(1977\)](#)
- [Melbourne Area \(1977\)](#)
- [North Central Area \(1981\)](#)

Each assessment report provides the following information:

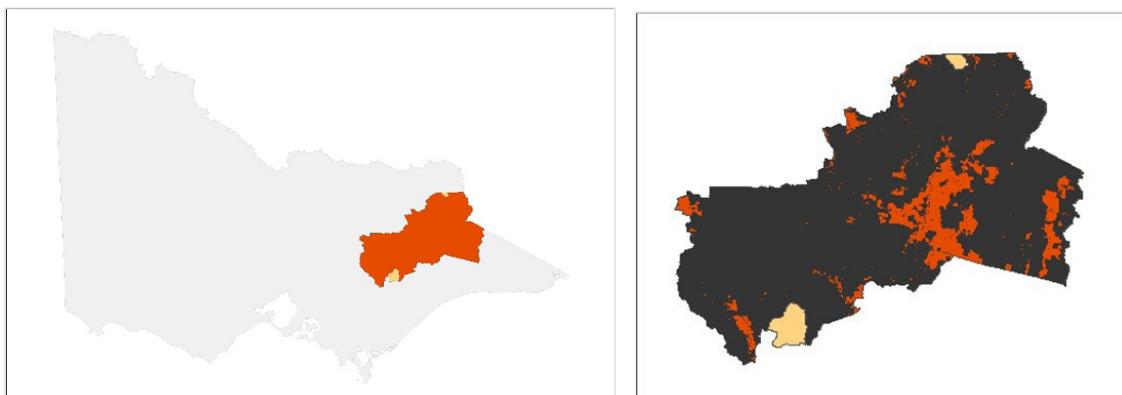
- an overview of the early LCC investigation and the key recommendations
- a summary of the main public land uses and land units in the early LCC investigation area
- the original extent of the LCC investigation area and the current extent of public land in that area
- the area of the early LCC investigation that has not been reviewed by a subsequent LCC-ECC-VEAC investigation (statewide thematic studies are not included at this level of analysis), and the estimated area of public land remaining unreviewed
- the extent of public land use categories excluded from this assessment by the terms of reference and the total extent of public land included in this assessment (see also table 2.1 in the June report)
- identification of geographic areas that have been superseded by LCC-ECC-VEAC investigations after 1983
- any areas within the broader early investigation boundary that were excluded from past studies (i.e. townships, boroughs excluded from early LCC investigations)
- any broadscale areas that have been superseded by later government land use decisions
- any larger areas identified as requiring review and a rationale.

### Approach for Melbourne Area and North Central Area

Melbourne Area and North Central Area have dispersed blocks of remaining recommendations and a different approach is used for the summary assessment reports presented here. Most of these original investigation areas have been reviewed since 1983. A detailed description of major land units, superseded recommendations, and areas that require review have not been provided for the small remaining areas.

The Melbourne Area unreviewed areas arise from technical changes in the boundary of later reviews, and these are described. For the North Central Area, the unreviewed areas are located outside the major reviews undertaken by ECC and VEAC in which investigation area boundaries were based on the extent of specific ecosystems.

## Alpine Area Special Investigation



The map on the left depicts the extent of this LCC investigation area (land remaining unreviewed is red, the area reviewed after 1983 is pale orange). The unreviewed public land is shown as black in the map on the right.

### LCC original investigation area extent (hectares)

<b>Total</b>	<b>1,610,788 hectares</b>
<b>Public land only</b>	<b>1,434,187 hectares</b>
<b>Areas of public land reviewed by LCC, ECC or VEAC</b>	
Wilderness Special Investigation (wilderness parks)	33,202
Rivers and Streams Special Investigation	4587
<b>Remaining unreviewed public land area (hectares)</b>	<b>1,396,398 hectares</b>
<b>Area of excluded public land use categories (hectares)</b>	
National parks	627,129
State forest	705,922
<b>Assessment area</b>	<b>63,347 hectares</b>

### Overview

The Alpine Area covers much of the Eastern Highlands extending from Mansfield and Licola eastwards to the Snowy River and Murray River headwaters. It contains virtually all alpine and most sub-alpine environments in Victoria. This area was initially investigated from 1973 to 1979. A special investigation was commissioned in 1982 to review the previous recommendations.

The original Alpine Area investigation from was the LCC's first big challenge. The area was the focus of conservation efforts and also provided a third of Victoria's hardwood sawlogs. Recreational users and mountain cattlemen all wanted continued access to the high country, and the Alpine region accounted for a quarter of Victoria's water supply. The Council received 14,013 submissions commenting on the draft recommendations published in April 1978. This remains the largest number of submissions to a report of the LCC, ECC or VEAC. The Council published its final recommendations in June 1979.

The LCC recommended four national parks (293,400 ha) and the extension of the existing Wabonga State Park (3100 ha) from the adjoining North Eastern Area. The Avon Wilderness Park was recommended for an area of 29,500 hectares building on the introduction of this category for Big Desert Wilderness Park recommended in the 1977 Mallee Area Investigation. Hardwood production (455,300 ha) and uncommitted land (499,000 ha) were major land use recommendations.

In May 1982, the LCC was directed to undertake a special investigation of the Alpine Area bearing in mind the newly elected Government's conservation policy for the Alpine region. Final

recommendations were due by 1 December 1983 and focused on additions to the Alpine park system. The 1983 special investigation recommendations replace those of the earlier Alpine Area investigation completed in 1979.

The draft recommendations received 4152 submissions. Final recommendations in November 1983 proposed a new consolidated Alpine National Park by including existing parks and adding some 275,000 hectares. The diverse environments of the new alpine national park system stretched from The Governors east across the Barry Range to the state border. Significant park additions were recommended in the area surrounding Dartmouth Dam and more than a dozen previously recommended natural features and scenic areas were included in a broad swath of park additions. Many of the park additions provided linkages to previously isolated national park blocks.

Many other land use recommendations were retained from the LCC's 1979 report.

In January 1985 Government accepted most recommendations from the special investigation, varying logging and grazing provisions in some areas. With the exception of two LCC special investigations (Wilderness, Rivers and Streams), public land in this area has not been subsequently reviewed.

### Assessment of recommendations and major land units

The special investigation has a large section dedicated to establishing a revised alpine parks system. The LCC felt that the area should be established and managed as a single alpine park unit. Government retained Snowy River National Park as a separate park and amalgamated other national and state park areas in a single Alpine National Park, now comprising around 660,607 hectares. More than 90 per cent of the Alpine National Park is located in the LCC's Alpine Area (612,180 ha). The current Alpine National Park consists of:

- three former national parks at Wonnangatta-Moroka (104,000 ha), Bogong (79,000 ha), Cobberas-Tingaringy (94,700 ha)
- recommended national parks additions identified in 19 blocks
- an addition of 3100 hectares to Wabonga Plateau State Park (18,600 ha) building on recommendations in the adjoining North Eastern Area
- areas recommended as state forest later added by subsequent government decisions to an expanded park.

The parts of Snowy River National Park within the Alpine Area (15,700 ha) were retained as a separate park. This park is more extensive outside the Alpine Area (total area 114,675 ha) and includes New Guinea Caves area that is now Aboriginal Title.

Alpine resort recreation areas comprising Mount Buller, Mount Stirling, Mount Hotham, Falls Creek were largely unchanged in the special investigation with a small area increase recommended for Falls Creek (total area around 9700 ha). These areas have been formally established under the *Alpine Resorts Act 1983* together with Lake Mountain and Mount Baw Baw alpine resorts located in the adjoining Melbourne Area district 2.

In the Alpine Area Special Investigation uncommitted land and hardwood production areas were now recommended as a new land use category 'state forest' (668,000 ha). Hydroelectricity production was identified as the primary land use for some 4200 hectares. Five existing historic reserves were recommended to continue across extensive areas (23,100 ha), and additional areas were recommended at Glen (Mount) Wills (9190 ha) and Mount Murphy (660 ha). Mount Wills (8760 ha), Grant (7310 ha) and Cassilis (4340 ha) are currently the three largest historic reserves in the state.

The existing Avon Wilderness Park (29,500 ha) and 18 reference areas (9900 ha) were recommended to continue in the special investigation. Of the original 30 natural features and scenic reserves, 12 were retained, Mount Skene was expanded by 660 hectares and a new reserve recommended at Macalister Gorge (1260 ha). The others were recommended for inclusion in the new alpine parks.

Other areas retained in the special investigation recommendations include Morass Creek Flora and Fauna Reserve (30 ha) near Benambra, eight bushland reserves, Lake Omeo lake reserve (737 ha) and four education areas. Sunnyside education area was recommended to be expanded by 230 hectares. Subsequently Mount Tamboritha education area was added to the Alpine National Park.

There were no areas recommended for softwood production or wildlife areas.

Five new and large nature conservation reserves were established in this area in 2009. These reserves comprise areas recommended as state forest or equivalent legacy categories of hardwood production and uncommitted land as follows:

- Marble Gully-Mount Tambo (6035 ha) consisting of areas recommended as a natural features and scenic reserve and state forest
- Mount Stewart (1614 ha) adjoining the natural features and scenic reserve
- Green Hills (517 ha) comprising land acquired
- parts of Dawson – Murrindal (1032 ha) and Timbarra River South (20.7 ha) mostly located in the LCC's adjoining Gippsland Lakes Hinterland Area.

### Areas of superseded recommendations

Several areas recommended as state forest, Wabonga Plateau State Park and some other areas were later included in a significantly bigger Alpine National Park. Substantial areas have been added to the Alpine National Park and new nature reserves have been established since the LCC's investigation was completed.

Avon Wilderness Park was amended in the LCC's Wilderness Special Investigation (1991) which recommended the removal of 350 hectares in the south eastern area containing campsites on the Avon River (for state forest). This park is within both the Alpine Area and the Gippsland Lakes Hinterland Area.

The special investigation recommended a new Wabba Wilderness Park be established over an area previously recommended as state forest. Around 5600 hectares of Wabba Wilderness Park is located in the Alpine Area, with the remaining 13,750 ha located in North Eastern Area district 1 and included in the North Eastern Area (Benalla-Upper Murray) Review (completed in 1986).

### Areas not reviewed

Although there are no major cities or townships in this investigation area, there are numerous areas of small Crown parcels and reserves that have not been reviewed in detail.

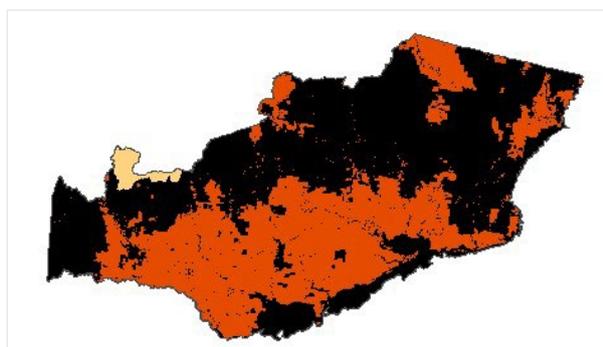
Areas of acquired Crown land have not been reviewed but typically have a clear land use purpose when transferred to the Crown.

### Summary of recommendations that require review

VEAC has identified the following broad types of early LCC recommendation categories that would benefit from review or assessment, rather than a list of specific locations. In this investigation area there are several land use categories that are significantly larger than, and atypical of, other locations across the state. These may benefit from review to determine if a different land use category is more consistent with the values and uses.

- Legacy or historic recommendations categories that require clarification to be assigned to a contemporary land use include:
  - Lake Omeo lake reserve
  - natural features and scenic reserves
  - education areas
- New areas of public land that have no formal land use recommendations.

## Gippsland Lakes Hinterland Area



The map on the left depicts the extent of this LCC investigation area (land remaining unreviewed is red, the area reviewed after 1983 is pale orange). The unreviewed public land is shown as black in the map on the right.

### LCC original investigation area extent (hectares)

<b>Total</b>	<b>871,052 hectares</b>
<b>Public land only</b>	<b>515,710 hectares</b>

#### Areas of public land reviewed by LCC, ECC or VEAC

Wilderness Special Investigation	11,990
Marine, Coastal and Estuarine Investigation	1738
Rivers and Streams Special Investigation	6057

<b>Remaining unreviewed public land area (hectares)</b>	<b>495,925 hectares</b>
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#### Unassessed public land area (hectares)

beds of lakes Wellington, King and Victoria	34,892
former rural city of Sale and township of Bairnsdale	5964

#### Area of excluded public land use categories (hectares)

National/ state park	23,341
Conservation park/ coastal park	1018
Regional park	4203
State forest	395,382
Trust for Nature (nature reserves)	494

<b>Assessment area</b>	<b>71,487 hectares</b>
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### Overview

The Gippsland Lakes Hinterland Area includes the foothills of the Eastern Highlands, the coastal plains north of Ninety Mile Beach and lakes areas adjoining South Gippsland Area District 1. More than 50 per cent of this investigation area is public land. Mostly the public land is in the inland elevated areas and fringing the Gippsland Lakes to the south. The southern boundary extends from Walhalla to Heyfield, then east around the southern foreshore of the lakes to Lakes Entrance and then along the ocean coast to Lake Tyers. The northern boundary includes parts of the highlands at Avon Wilderness, areas around Dargo, and Swifts Creek to Murrindal.

This was one of the first LCC investigations to discuss management of cultural sites with local Aboriginal communities, particularly for the Lake Tyers area. Final recommendations were published in February 1983 and accepted by government in June 1984.

A strong community focus for this investigation was on continued recreation access in areas surrounding the Gippsland Lakes. Crown land forming the beds of lakes Wellington, King and Victoria (around 33,500 ha) was excluded from both LCC investigations and the later ECC Marine, Coastal and Estuarine Investigation. Spatially defining the extent of these shallow water bodies was and remains technically challenging.

The LCC recommended the establishment of five parks, cave reserves for limestone features at Buchan, and the Gippsland Lakes Reserve for important wetlands around the lakes. A key proposal was the extension of Snowy River National Park downriver to connect to the Gippsland Lakes area. Other recommendations were additions to Lake Tyers State Park into this investigation area and a new Mitchell River State Park (changed by government decision to a national park and now Aboriginal Title). Uncommitted land (250,000 ha) and hardwood production (157,000 ha) formed the main land uses recommended in the highlands. Despite the high level of public land in this study area (58 per cent) only 12 per cent was recommended for parks and reserves, one of the lowest proportions of all original investigations completed by the LCC.

There were no areas recommended as wildlife reserves or lake reserves.

Later thematic investigations including the Wilderness, and Rivers and Streams special investigations, and the ECC Marine, Coastal and Estuarine Investigation replace some recommendations. There have been several other subsequent formal government land use decisions in this area that replace recommendations by the LCC.

### Assessment of recommendations and major land units

In this investigation area a new section of the Snowy River National Park was recommended for around 2250 hectares. This park is much more extensive in the adjoining East Gippsland Area with a total area now of around 114,675 hectares.

Two state parks were recommended by the LCC. Mitchell River State Park was recommended for an area of some 12,200 hectares including the smaller pre-existing Glenaladale National Park (160 ha). Government retained and expanded this area as a new national park with some boundary changes and this park is now around 14,450 hectares. In the northern part of the park more than 850 hectares have been added by Crown land acquisitions and inclusion of some areas recommended by the LCC as uncommitted land.

The LCC's second state park recommendation was an extension of the existing Lake Tyers State Park with some 5100 hectares addition in a new Lake Tyers-Nowa Nowa State Park. This park was previously established over an area of around 2000 hectares in the East Gippsland Area Final Recommendations (1977). Government expanded the existing state park and retained the existing name. This park is now around 8680 hectares with around 5130 hectares in the LCC's Gippsland Lakes Hinterland Area. Lake Tyers (lake bed) including the Nowa Nowa Arm cover some 1438 hectares and were not included in the park. Although technically within this investigation area, the lake bed has no LCC-ECC-VEAC land use recommendations.

LCC recommended expanding the existing Avon Wilderness Park from the adjoining Alpine Area by addition of some 12,200 hectares. In the LCC's Wilderness Special Investigation, an area of 350 hectares containing campsites on the Avon River was recommended for removal from the wilderness area.

Some 435 hectares near Castleburn, recommended as uncommitted land, were later added to the extensive Alpine National Park mostly located to the north of the Gippsland Lakes Hinterland area.

Two regional parks were recommended: one on the shores of Lake Glenmaggie and the other to the north of Lakes Entrance at Colquhoun. The recommended 720 hectare Lake Glenmaggie Regional Park (now estimated at 790 ha) consists of areas held in freehold title by state water authorities,

Crown land and 52 hectares now owned by Trust for Nature. The recommendation for Colquhoun Regional Park covers around 3600 hectares within state forest (currently documented as 3452 ha). Neither of these parks have been formally established but are managed in accordance with the government-accepted land use recommendations.

Tara Range Park was established in 1989 on schedule 3 of National Parks Act as a subsequent government land use decision by including an area recommended as uncommitted land. Of the total 7620 hectares, some 1018 hectares is in this investigation area, with the remaining section in the adjoining East Gippsland Area.

The LCC's Gippsland Lakes Hinterland Final Recommendations (1983) established the Gippsland Lakes Reserve as a new public land use category in addition to the coastal reserve category retained on the open coast and the foreshore reserve category for areas of more intensive use at Paynesville and Metung. The lake beds and water bodies were excluded. The LCC's approach focused on integrated management of public land across the 10,200 hectares with proposed zoning directing location-specific management objectives. The zoning approach was not adopted by government.

Subsequent reservation of around 5085 hectares of the Gippsland Lakes Reserve for 'protection and management of wildlife' has more specifically assigned these areas to the wildlife and game reserve land use category. These areas are roughly within the LCC's Gippsland Lakes Reserve proposed zone 1. VEAC considers the remaining areas of Gippsland Lakes Reserve together with the lake beds and foreshore reserve to be equivalent to coastal reserve.

Extensive areas were recommended as uncommitted land (250,000 ha) and hardwood production (157,000 ha) with some 395,310 hectares currently remaining as the contemporary equivalent land use of state forest.

Three reference areas (2040 ha) were recommended for areas of uncommitted land. Presently two of these overlay state forest north of Lake Glenmaggie, and Tambo River Reference Area (490 ha) overlays the new Mount Elizabeth Nature Conservation Reserve.

Recommendations were also made for 28 bushland reserves (120 ha), six extensive natural features and scenic reserves (8400 ha), three education areas (610 ha) and one highway park at Stratford (70 ha) for an existing reserve set aside for 'public recreation and camping'. Seven cave reserves were recommended. These are now classified as nature reserves by VEAC and include an area of 530 hectares.

Recommendations were made for eight flora reserves, most of which were new, and four flora and fauna reserves including the large areas at Providence Ponds and Moormung flora and fauna reserves. Providence Ponds Flora and Fauna Reserve was expanded to include areas of railways owned land proposed as possible additions by the LCC (153 ha), and new Crown land acquired in 2010 (115 ha). Moormung Flora and Fauna Reserve (966 ha) has not been formally implemented but is managed as a nature conservation reserve.

The current Glenmaggie Flora and Fauna Reserve (797 ha) comprises areas recommended as both Heyfield and Glenmaggie flora reserves, and large areas recommended for hardwood production. This change results from government land use planning undertaken for the Gippsland RFA. This RFA process also led to four new large nature conservation reserves established across this area from 2004 to 2009. These additions to schedule 5 of the Crown Land (Reserves) Act largely comprise areas recommended as hardwood production and uncommitted land, and other reserves as follows:

- Mount Elizabeth (5236 ha) includes the 2300 hectares largely recommended as natural features and scenic reserve, uncommitted land and Tambo River Reference Area (490 ha)
- Boggy Creek (265 ha) consists of areas recommended as uncommitted land
- Timbarra River South (1170 ha) comprises uncommitted land and hardwood production with around 21 hectares extending into the Alpine Area

- Dawson – Murrindal (2151 ha) includes 250 hectares recommended as Plum Gully flora reserve, uncommitted land and hardwood production. Around 1032 hectares extends into the Alpine Area.

The three education areas at Seaton (120 ha), Melwood (224 ha) and Cuffinger (325 ha) have not been implemented through reservation but are managed in accordance with the LCC's recommendations.

### Areas of superseded recommendations

As outlined above, several areas recommended for hardwood production or uncommitted land were later included in new or expanded parks and reserves. Substantial areas have been added to Alpine National Park, a new Tara Range Park was established, and several new nature reserves were established or expanded since the LCC's investigation.

Avon Wilderness Park was amended in the LCC's Wilderness Special Investigation (1991) by recommending the removal of 350 hectares in the south eastern area containing campsites on the Avon River.

### Areas not reviewed

Substantial areas of the Gippsland Lakes beds (33,523 ha) and the bed of Lake Tyers (1434 ha) were excluded from all LCC-ECC-VEAC investigations. This area was documented in VEAC's Assessment of Victoria's Coastal Reserves (2019) and is equivalent to Gippsland Lakes Reserve as a subcategory of coastal reserves. The bed of Lake Tyers is described as coastal waters reserve.

Public land in Bairnsdale (604 ha) and Sale (688 ha) was excluded from LCC investigations and has not been reviewed.

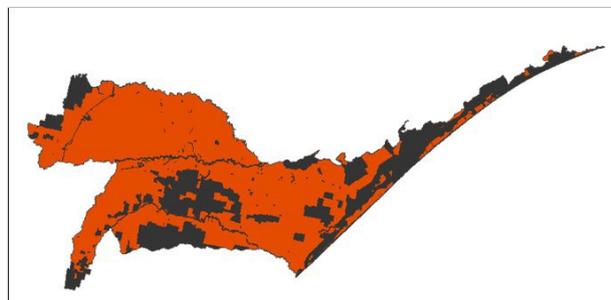
In addition to the large nature conservation reserves described above, other areas not reviewed by the LCC-ECC-VEAC are: Swallow Lagoon Nature Conservation Reserve (193 ha) established by land transfer to the Crown in 2002; Bengworden Nature Conservation Reserve (107 ha) transferred to the Crown in 2008; and Tabberabbera Nature Conservation Reserve (191 ha), a new reserve established near Mitchell River National Park in 2010.

### Summary of recommendations that require review

VEAC has identified the following broad types of early LCC recommendation categories that would benefit from review or assessment, rather than a list of specific locations.

- Legacy or historic recommendations categories that require clarification to be assigned to a contemporary land use include:
  - Natural features and scenic reserves
  - Gippsland lakes reserve and the lake beds
  - highway parks
  - education areas
- Public land in the former cities of Sale and Bairnsdale that were excluded from Gippsland Lakes Hinterland Area and have not been included in subsequent LCC-ECC-VEAC investigations
- New areas of public land that have no formal land use recommendations and no clear land use.

## South Gippsland Area District 1



The map on the left depicts the extent of this LCC investigation area as red. The map on the right shows unreviewed public land as black.

### LCC original investigation area extent (hectares)

<b>Total</b>	<b>225,753 hectares</b>
<b>Public land only</b>	<b>60,984 hectares</b>
<b>Areas of public land reviewed by LCC, ECC or VEAC</b>	
Stradbroke Area Special Investigation	6779
Rivers and Streams Special Investigation	1424
Gippsland Lakes Hinterland Area	248
Marine, Coastal & Estuarine Investigation	26
<b>New, acquired or excluded public land</b>	<b>1613</b>
<b>Remaining unreviewed public land area (hectares)</b>	<b>50,894 hectares</b>
<b>Area of excluded public land use categories (hectares)</b>	
National/ state park	13,154
Conservation park/ coastal park	17,845
State forest (including uncommitted land)	9687
<b>Assessment area</b>	<b>10,208 hectares</b>

### Overview

South Gippsland Area District 1 comprises portions of the Gippsland coastal plains from Traralgon to Seaspray and along the coast to Lakes Entrance. The Ninety Mile Beach and parts of the Gippsland Lakes are included. Much of the land here has been cleared for agriculture.

This was the second investigation completed by the LCC and final recommendations were published in October 1973. Recommendations were presented separately for each of five regions or blocks (numbered 2 to 6) within the investigation area. It is evident that the approach to land use categorisation was in early development here and this presentation of information was not adopted for later investigations.

Conflicts between hunting and conservation interests at significant wetlands were a feature of this investigation. Public land between the Gippsland Lakes and the Ninety Mile Beach was recommended as the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Reserve – which included the existing Lakes National Park established in 1956 – to accommodate both protection of biodiversity and recreation, including

hunting. Management zoning was proposed to accommodate the broad range of uses across this area of more than 16,000 hectares.

The first new state park to be recommended by the LCC was Holey Plains comprising some 10,000 hectares of heathy woodlands located south of the Latrobe River and between Traralgon and Sale.

Recommendations for a new 16,500 hectares Gippsland Lakes Coastal Reserve was accepted in principle with legal difficulties resolved by retaining The Lakes National Park (2400 ha). Approval in 1977 led to balance of the area being added the then new National Parks Act 1975 Schedule 3 as Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park (now comprising around 17,850 ha).

The 9500 hectares recommended for 'Dutson Downs waste disposal' was an existing government commitment. The LCC stated that alternative locations should be investigated for treatment and disposal of industrial and domestic waste by Latrobe Valley Water and Sewerage Board. Around 4440 hectares of this area remains unreserved Crown land with large areas hosting heathy woodland vegetation, wetlands and some softwood plantations.

Other recommendations were Dowd Morass and Lake Coleman wildlife reserves, hardwood and softwood production as well as uncommitted land. Several locations were identified for land exchange (agriculture) or not required for public purposes. Small areas of public land were generally not identified in the recommendations, however the LCC did state that "where land is not specifically mentioned, present legal uses and tenure should continue". In March 1975 Government accepted most recommendations, delaying coastal reserve, agriculture, and some timber production areas.

The LCC recommended a large area as uncommitted land foreshadowing the 1977 Stradbroke Special Investigation, and in an era faced with an energy supply crisis, the potential need to access underlying brown coal reserves. Rivers & Streams Special Investigation (1992), and ECC's Marine Coastal & Estuarine Investigation (2000) replaced some specific recommendations.

Consistent with other investigations in this region, the Gippsland Lakes beds were excluded from this study and remain an area that has no public land use recommendations by LCC, ECC or VEAC.

### Assessment of recommendations and major land units

It is apparent that the LCC's system of land use was in early development at the time of this investigation. Apart from the broad nature of the land use recommendations and the lack of detailed mapping, the land use categories were only broadly articulated and included several notations regarding other existing or proposed government land uses including sale and land exchange. Many areas retained existing land uses or deferred any specific decisions to a future process.

In addition to the recommended Gippsland Lakes Coastal Reserve, new parks and reserves were recommended for Holey Plains State Park, Gormandale flora and fauna reserve, and three bushland reserves. Three existing recreation reserves, Merriman Creek bushland reserve and wildlife reserves at Dowd Morass and Lake Coleman were identified in the recommendations.

The balance of public land comprises a mosaic of softwood production, uncommitted land with decisions for specific use deferred, hardwood production and Dutson Downs waste disposal area.

### Areas of superseded recommendations

An area of about 39 hectares surrounding Rosedale sand (gravel) pit and municipal tip was reserved in 2011 for preservation of an area of native plants and is now identified as Rosedale Flora Reserve.

Some small areas recommended as Holey Plains State Park that were not included at the time of establishment of the park are depicted as state forest (reflecting the prior land use and as uncommitted land). A new land use has not been identified for these areas.

Some areas recommended for softwood production have not been cleared of native vegetation, while parts of this recommendation have been transferred to timber produces. Around 120 hectares south of Chessum Road recommended for softwood production was added to Holey Plains State Park.

Two bushland reserve recommendations were later reserved for a different land use: recommendation 3e Callignee for a wildlife reserve that was classified as a nature conservation reserve in 1999, and recommendation 2h Merriman's Creek as a flora reserve in 1978.

The Gippsland Lakes Coastal Reserve as recommended was implemented by retaining The Lakes National Park (now 2407 ha), establishing a new Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park on schedule 3 of the National Parks Act, and some small residual areas are depicted as Gippsland Lakes Reserve or coastal reserve.

### Areas not reviewed

Several small areas were not included in the specific land use recommendations. The LCC acknowledged there were a range of small reserves and land uses such as stream frontages not identified and, where land was not specifically mentioned, the intention was that legal uses and tenure should continue.

There is a substantial area of some 2830 hectares of new public land across this investigation area that has no land use recommendations (2628 ha), and there are areas specifically excluded from the LCC's investigations (e.g. Gippsland Lakes Reserve forming the lake bed and former township of Sale).

A large proportion of new public land since the LCC's 1973 recommendations was acquired by land exchange or transfer. Most of this area has been added to the following parks and reserves: The Lakes National Park (280 ha), Dowd Morass Wildlife Reserve (650 ha), Stradbroke Flora and Fauna Reserve (560 ha), Giffard Flora Reserve (246 ha), Sale Common Nature Conservation Reserve (16.3 ha), and Boola Boola State Forest (560 ha).

A significant number of small parcels at the Ninety Mile Beach are part of a government compulsory buyback program for an inappropriate 1950-60s residential development (around 23 ha comprising around 167 parcels). This land will be managed consistently with the neighbouring Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park for its protection and public enjoyment or for other public purposes. This area is shown as uncategorised public land in the interim.

### Summary of recommendations that require review

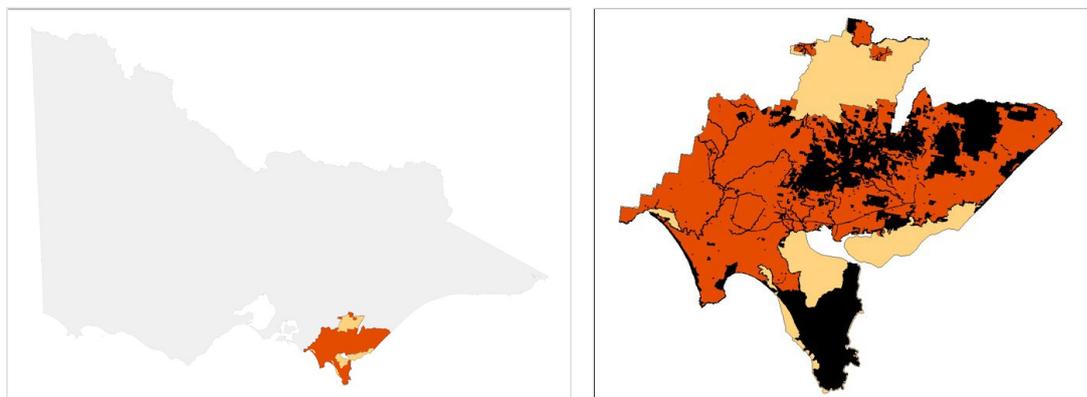
Most public land here has not been reviewed since 1973. Many small areas of public land have no specific land use recommendation. For some of these small blocks, the original use may have changed or may be exhausted such as gravel reserves or historic watering purposes reserves.

In addition to small blocks, areas that would benefit from a review include areas with recommendations for:

- hardwood production and uncommitted land (state forest)
- softwood production, particularly those areas that retain native vegetation
- waste disposal area, notably an area forming part of Lake Coleman north of Longford-Loch Sport Road and sections abutting Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park
- small areas remaining from agriculture recommendations (land not required for public purposes)

Review of areas recommended as 'other reserves and public land' land may identify a narrower land use categorisation based on Crown land reservation purpose or long-term use.

## South Gippsland Area District 2



The map on the left depicts the extent of this LCC investigation area (land remaining unreviewed is red, the area reviewed after 1983 is pale orange). The unreviewed public land is shown as black in the map on the right.

### LCC original investigation area extent (hectares)

<b>Total</b>	<b>644,896 hectares</b>
<b>Public land only</b>	<b>168,986 hectares</b>
<b>Areas of public land reviewed by LCC, ECC or VEAC</b>	
Marine, Coastal and Estuarine Investigation	6291
La Trobe Valley Special Investigation	1304
Rivers and Streams Special Investigation	4210
<b>Remaining unreviewed public land area (hectares)</b>	<b>157,181 hectares</b>
<b>Area of excluded public land use categories (hectares)</b>	
National park/ marine national park	49,791
Conservation park/ coastal park	4156
Regional park/ forest park	4601
State forest	56,727
Trust for nature (nature reserve)	224
<b>Assessment area</b>	<b>41,682 hectares</b>

### Overview

Much like the Corangamite Area in the west of the state, the South Gippsland Area encompasses a broad landscape with rugged scenic coastlines, coastal inlets and embayments, mountainous ranges, and inland plains. The South Gippsland Area District 2 includes portions of the Latrobe Valley, Strzelecki Ranges, South Gippsland coastal plains and Wilsons Promontory. It contains large deposits of brown coal and Victoria's best known national park at Wilsons Promontory, first established in 1898.

The South Gippsland Area District 2 descriptive report was published in October 1980 and final recommendations were published in November 1982. During the investigation, the LCC was directed to carry out a special investigation of Gellions Run (all of which is within South Gippsland Area District 2), and to make recommendations on the best use of this land, bearing in mind the underlying Gelliondale coal field.

The final recommendations for Gellions Run were published in May 1981 and broadly classified public land as either flora reserve or uncommitted land. In the final recommendations for South Gippsland

Area District 2 these areas were recommended as marine and wildlife reserves and softwood production respectively. No recommendations for Gellions Run Special Investigation remain in effect.

The main recommended uses in South Gippsland Area District 2 were marine reserves, national parks, hardwood and softwood production areas. Key recommendations were expansions to the existing Wilsons Promontory National Park and Tarra Valley-Bulga State Park (incorporating two small national parks), a new Venus Bay-Waratah Bay Coastal Park, marine reserves, and three marine and wildlife reserves at Corner Inlet, Shallow Inlet and Nooramunga (implemented as marine and coastal parks).

In June 1984 the Government accepted all recommendations except those for softwood production and Morwell Flora and Fauna Reserve (now included in Morwell National Park).

A major issue for this investigation was whether cleared public land in the Strzelecki Ranges from failed early land settlements should be reforested with mountain ash or used for softwood plantations. There have been several subsequent government land use decisions related to plantations in this investigation area.

The most far reaching decisions were those in the 1990s to first establish the government -owned enterprise Victorian Plantations Corporation (VPC) in 1993 to manage and maintain approximately 170,000 hectares of Crown land. These areas comprised softwood plantations, hardwood plantations and non-plantation land (including areas of native forest). In 1998 government sold VPC to Hancock Victorian Plantations Pty Ltd (HVP) with a licence to the 170,000 hectares vested with VPC, granting HVP the right to operate a plantation business on that land in perpetuity. There is around 46,600 hectares of the licensed area in South Gippsland District 2.

In 2008, the 'Cores and Links' agreement was made between the Victorian government and HVP Plantations for the future hand back of some 8050 hectares of native forest and mountain ash plantation for a new conservation reserve in Gippsland's Strzelecki Ranges. An area of 2390 hectares within the cores and links was surrendered by HPV in 2016 and reserved as a Brataulung Forest Park. The remaining 162,000 hectares of former VPC plantation land in Victoria is Crown land with a perpetual licence and is generally depicted in the earlier reports as either plantation, softwood production or state forest.

The northern part of South Gippsland Area District 2 encompasses parts of the Latrobe Valley. In August 1986, the LCC was directed to investigate certain public land of around 6100 hectares in the Latrobe Valley Special Investigation, including State Electricity Commission of Victoria (SECV) surplus land and other uncommitted land. Some types of public land were not included in the special investigation and retain recommendations from South Gippsland Area District 2 although they fall within the boundary of the special investigation area. The LCC recommended that some areas with natural or recreation values, or needed for future brown coal development, were to be retained, notably Traralgon South Flora and Fauna Reserve, while other areas were recommended for disposal. Later, when the SECV was dismantled, many of the recommendations to retain land for future coal development were revoked.

The recommended marine reserve and marine and wildlife reserves around Wilsons Promontory and the faltering attempts to effectively implement them were a catalyst for the LCC's Marine and Coastal Special Investigation in 1991. This study was completed in 2000, almost a decade later, by the ECC as the Marine, Coastal and Estuarine Investigation.

Stream frontage recommendations were replaced by those of the LCC's Rivers and Streams Special Investigation.

### Assessment of recommendations and major land units

The marine and coastal environment is a focus for the major parks and reserves. This area contains a diverse range of marine and terrestrial parks and reserves. Wilsons Promontory National Park is the most well known of these and now comprises some 49,000 hectares. The other existing National Parks Act areas at the time were two small national parks around 220 hectares in total that the LCC

recommended be amalgamated as the new Tarra Valley–Bulga State Park, with linkages established from land owned by Australian Paper Manufactures Pty Ltd. These national park areas were retained as the renamed Tarra–Bulga National Park (1300 ha) which has since been expanded to around 2000 hectares by inclusion of areas recommended as hardwood production, softwood production or land acquisitions. This park is Aboriginal Title.

A new coastal park encompassing the scenic coastline west of Wilsons Promontory from Waratah Bay to Point Smyth was established as the Cape Liptrap Coastal Park (4384 ha). Two regional parks were recommended at Mirboo North (1245 ha) and Tyers Park (793 ha). The latter was an addition of 520 hectares to the area previously recommended in the LCC's adjoining Melbourne Area.

Brataualung Forest Park (2563 ha) was established in 2018 under the *Forests Act 1958* as part of the Cores and Links Agreement described above. This area provides a step towards establishing a connection between Gunyah Rainforest Scenic Reserve and Tarra–Bulga National Park.

Five wildlife reserves were recommended in this investigation with three available for hunting: Freshwater Swamp (Woodside Beach) Wildlife Reserve (36 ha), an expanded Jack Smith Lake Wildlife Reserve (2782 ha) and Lake Denison Wildlife Reserve (117 ha). Seal Islands east of Wilsons Promontory and Bald Hills Creek wildlife reserves are now classified as nature conservation reserves.

There were five recommended reference areas: three in Wilsons Promontory National Park, one in Tarra–Bulga National Park, and one in Mullungdung Flora and Fauna Reserve (1656 ha) near Woodside.

Other recommendations include 12 flora reserves, three flora and fauna reserves, 43 bushland reserves, eight streamside reserves, and five scenic reserves including the Gunyah Rainforest Scenic Reserve (now 711 ha and to be expanded as part of the Cores and Links Agreement).

Traralgon South Flora and Fauna Reserve (846 ha) is a recommendation from the 1987 Latrobe Valley Special Investigation and supersedes LCC's earlier recommendations for uncommitted land and coal production.

Giffard (Rifle Range) Flora Reserve was originally recommended for some 500 hectares but inclusion of acquired Crown land extends this reserve into the adjoining South Gippsland Area District 1 for a total of around 845 hectares.

There is one education area at Jeeralang North (150 ha). One geological reserve was recommended for Koonwarra fish beds (20.4 ha) in areas located along the South Gippsland Highway road reserve, Melbourne–Yarram railway and the Tarwin River.

### *Marine and coastal parks, and marine reserves*

The marine and coastal parks and marine reserve have a complex history and have changed configuration several times since initially recommended by the LCC in 1982. Most changes result from the government's implementation of the ECC's Marine Coastal and Estuarine Investigation Final Recommendations (2000) with establishment of marine national parks and sanctuaries across the state.

The LCC's three recommended marine and wildlife reserves were established as marine and coastal parks at Corner Inlet (28,422 ha), Nooramunga (30,005 ha), Shallow Inlet (1974 ha). The Wilsons Promontory Marine Reserve was established as a marine park and a separate marine reserve.

Corner Inlet Marine National Park was later established over parts of the Corner Inlet Marine and Coastal Park. Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park (15,590 ha) includes most of the area recommended as a marine reserve.

Andersons Inlet was recommended as a wildlife management co-operative area by the LCC to be established under the *Wildlife Act 1975*. In the ECC's Marine Coastal and Estuarine Investigation this area is recommended as Coastal Waters Reserve.

VEAC's Marine Investigation Final Report (2014) recommended the areas of the Wilsons Promontory Marine Reserve (458 ha) not included in the Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park be

incorporated into the adjacent Wilsons Promontory Marine Park (5713 ha). This recommendation has been accepted by government, although not yet formally implemented.

### Areas of superseded recommendations

The complex history of land use decisions in forest of the Strzelecki Ranges and the marine environment are too detailed to outline here. In summary, the LCC's 1982 recommendations have been superseded at Morwell Flora and Fauna Reserve (now included in Morwell National Park), Brataualung Forest Park, Traralgon South Flora and Fauna Reserve, and several other parks and reserves.

The LCC's Rivers and Streams Special Investigation and the ECC's Marine, Coastal and Estuarine Investigation and subsequent government decisions replaced some recommendations from the South Gippsland Area District 2 investigation.

### Areas not reviewed

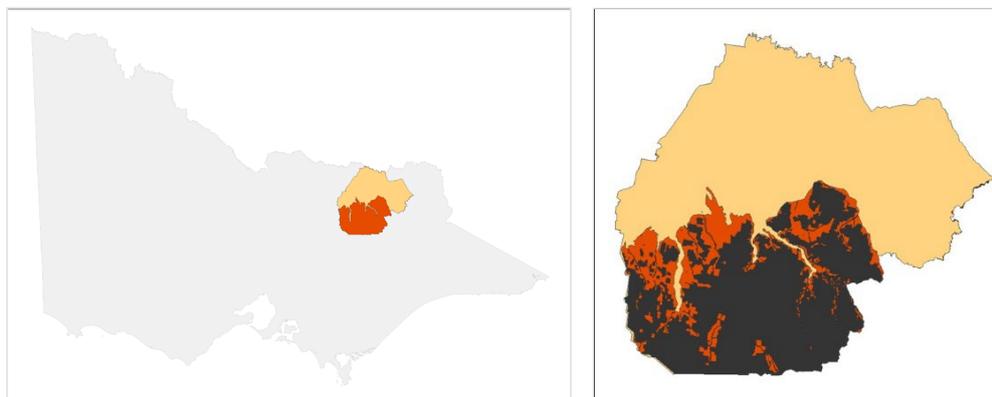
Public land in the former City of Traralgon was excluded from this investigation. This area is estimated to be some 2050 hectares with around 90 hectares of public land.

### Summary of recommendations that require review

VEAC has identified the following broad types of early LCC recommendation categories that would benefit from review or assessment, rather than a list of specific locations.

- Legacy or historic public land categories that require clarification to be assigned to a contemporary land use include:
  - wildlife reserves
  - scenic reserves, geological reserve
  - minerals and stone, coal production
  - education areas.
- Public land in the former township of Traralgon excluded from South Gippsland Area District 2 and that has not been included in subsequent LCC-ECC-VEAC investigations
- New areas of public land that have no formal land use recommendations.
- Areas of broad recommendations such as 'other reserves and public land' would benefit from review. Later government decisions have allocated some of these areas to a specific use. The remaining areas would benefit from review or assessment to determine the best public land use.
- Areas recommended as roadside conservation, mineral and stone production, agriculture that have not been alienated, some areas of which retain native vegetation, would benefit from a more widespread review or assessment. Cleared areas may no longer be required in the public land estate.
- The complexity of land use information relating to softwood plantations and hardwood production recommendations would benefit from a detailed review to improve information and documentation, particularly for those areas not held by HPV under licence.
- Similarly, public land within the Latrobe Valley Special Investigation area would benefit from a targeted review.

## North Eastern Area Districts 3, 4 & 5



The map on the left depicts the extent of this LCC investigation area (land remaining unreviewed is red, the area reviewed after 1983 is pale orange). The unreviewed public land is shown as black in the map on the right.

### LCC original investigation area extent (hectares)

<b>Total</b>	<b>835,095 hectares</b>
<b>Public land only</b>	<b>420,700 hectares</b>
<b>Areas of public land reviewed by LCC, ECC or VEAC</b>	
Wilderness Special Investigation	13,750
Rivers and Streams Special Investigation	2072
Box-Ironbark Forests and Woodlands Investigation	13.6
River Red Gum Forests Investigation	489
North Eastern Area (Benalla-Upper Murray) Review	141,581
<b>Remaining unreviewed public land area (hectares)</b>	<b>262,794 hectares</b>
<b>Area of excluded public land use categories (hectares)</b>	
National/ state park	47,499
Conservation park	877
Regional park/ forest park	4703
State forest	188,337
Trust for Nature (nature reserves)	188
<b>Assessment area</b>	<b>21,190 hectares</b>

### Overview

The LCC's North Eastern Area comprises five districts mostly east of the Hume Highway and includes land from Bright, Beechworth, and Myrtleford to near Wangaratta and upstream along the Murray River to Wodonga. Districts 1 and 2 were studied separately and districts 3, 4 and 5 amalgamated in a single report. This investigation of three districts comprising some 421,400 ha of public land completed the LCC's initial investigation of the entire North Eastern Area. Final recommendations were published in April 1977.

The rural city of Wodonga comprising around 34,570 hectares was excluded from this investigation, although this area together with Wangaratta were later included in subsequent reviews and investigations, the most recent of which is VEAC's River Red Gum Forests Investigation. Districts 3, 4 and 5 includes the townships of Beechworth, Chiltern, Myrtleford and Bright.

Key recommendations were expansion of Mount Buffalo National Park to 26,800 hectares, a new Wambonga Plateau State Park (18,600 ha) noting adjoining parts in the Alpine Area would be included in the future, regional parks at Baranduda Range (3100 ha), Beechworth (1500 ha) and Chiltern (4000 ha), and the now obsolete category of 'multi-purpose park' at Mount Pilot (13,100 ha). Some 6530 hectares was recommended as new softwood production areas bringing the total area to around 17,000 hectares at that time.

A phase-out of timber harvesting was recommended for the state park, and there were extensive areas retained as uncommitted land (258,000 ha). This investigation established a precedent for gradual 'phasing out' of timber production in some parts of recommended parks, in this case over ten years in the Wabonga Plateau State Park. Many believed that this opened the door for the 'once only logging' approach later used in other areas, notably the Alps.

All recommendations were accepted by Government in 1978 and 1979. The entire area of District 4 was included in the LCC's North Eastern Area (Benalla–Upper Murray) Review (1984-1986). Districts 3 and 5 were included in the Ovens Softwood Plantation Zone Special Investigation requested in 1981; however the LCC's recommendations for that investigation were not accepted by government.

Some recommendations were replaced by recommendations of the LCC Wilderness, and Rivers and Streams special investigations, the ECC's Box-Ironbark Forests & Woodlands and VEAC's River Red Gum Forests investigations.

### Assessment of recommendations and major land units

The LCC recommended that Mount Buffalo National Park be increased by around 15,000 hectares to 26,800 hectares. The LCC's new Wambonga Plateau State Park (18,600 ha) was later expanded and added to the extensive Alpine National Park.

All regional parks (and the multi-purpose park) are located in district 4 that was included in the LCC's North Eastern Area (Benalla–Upper Murray) Review. Most were also included in the ECC's Box-Ironbark Forests & Woodlands Investigation and recommended as parts of the new Chiltern–Mt Pilot National Park. Beechworth Historic Park (1011 ha) and Baranduda Range Regional Park (3840 ha) have been subsequently reviewed and regional park land use category retained.

Around 12,650 hectares was identified as hardwood production and 27,900 hectares as forest area to provide a buffer of native forest for softwood plantations (now considered to be equivalent to state forest). Extensive areas of state forest have been retained and now comprise some 188,337 hectares of the unreviewed area within North Eastern Area Districts 3, 4 & 5.

Other recommendations include 16 water production areas, 40 bushland reserves, 23 streamside reserves and 7 scenic reserves. No wildlife reserves, historic reserves or flora and fauna reserves were identified. Six reference areas (4850 ha) were recommended including two extending over some 1100 hectares each at Mount Buffalo and Pilot Range.

Three of the recommended four education areas have been retained, comprising Carboor Upper Education Area (415 ha), Wandiligong Education Area (79 ha) and, although included in North Eastern Area (Benalla–Upper Murray) Review, Lockhart Creek Education Area (443 ha) was also retained. Mount Barambogie Education Area was later added to Chiltern–Mt Pilot National Park.

### Areas of superseded recommendations

Wabonga Plateau State Park (18,600 ha) was expanded in the LCC's Alpine Area recommendations and was subsequently included in the extensive revisions to the Alpine National Park.

Baranduda Regional Park (3100 ha) within district 4 was included in the LCC's North Eastern Area (Benalla–Upper Murray) Review and recommended to be retained as regional park and expanded. Similarly, Beechworth Regional Park (1500 ha) was recommended as regional park in the LCC's review and in the more recent ECC Box-Ironbark Forests & Woodlands Investigation.

Chiltern Regional Park (4000 ha) included areas initially proposed as Mt Pilot State Park. The other parts of the proposed Mt Pilot State Park (13,100 ha) were changed in the final recommendations to

the now obsolete category of 'multi-purpose park'. In the LCC's review of North Eastern Area (Benalla-Upper Murray) including District 4 these park recommendations were retained. However, ECC's Box-Ironbark Forests & Woodlands Investigation recommended these parks as a new Chiltern–Mt Pilot National Park together with the Mount Barambogie education area and much of the uncommitted land in that area.

Areas recommended as uncommitted land have later been included in national parks.

### Areas not reviewed

It is difficult to quantify the amount of public land added since the initial investigation was completed in 1977. There are around 2150 hectares in VEAC's datasets that have no LCC recommendations including around 1000 hectares added to the Alpine National Park, new softwood plantations, and new areas of state forest.

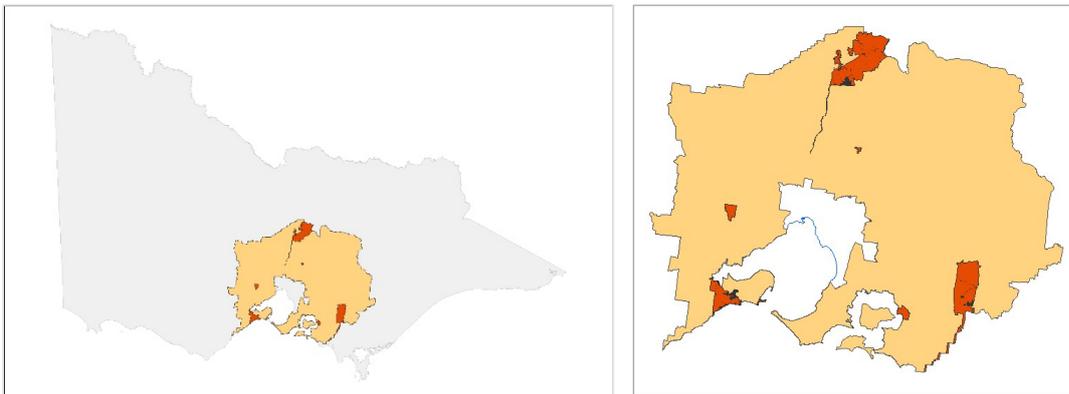
New nature reserves have been established at TFN's Greta South (105 ha) and Myrree (83 ha) reserves. These are the only two nature reserves identified in the unreviewed portions of North Eastern Area Districts 3 and 5.

### Summary of recommendations that require review

VEAC has identified the following broad types of early LCC recommendations that would benefit from review or assessment, rather than a list of specific locations.

- School plantations (8.2 ha), softwood plantations (20,550 ha)
- stone areas (30 ha)
- education areas (494 ha).
- Locations that may no longer be required for the recommended use are the two large scenic reserves:
  - Powers Lookout Scenic Reserve (945 ha) has not been reviewed since 1977
  - Mount Stanley Scenic Reserve (2770 ha) located south east of Beechworth was included in the LCC's 1986 review and retained and expanded as a scenic reserve.
- Review of areas recommended as 'other reserves and public land' land may identify a narrower land use categorisation based on Crown land reservation purpose or long-term use.

## Melbourne Area



The map on the left depicts the extent of this LCC investigation area (land remaining unreviewed is red, the area reviewed after 1983 is pale orange). The unreviewed public land is shown as black in the map on the right.

### LCC original investigation area extent (hectares)

<b>Total</b>	<b>2,718,077 hectares</b>
<b>Public land only</b>	<b>899,945 hectares</b>
<b>Remaining unreviewed public land area (hectares)</b>	<b>8036 hectares</b>

### Area of excluded public land use categories (hectares)

State parks	740
Regional parks	17
State forest	1471

**Assessment area** **5809 hectares**

The investigation area surrounds Melbourne, outside the metropolitan area as it existed at the time. It extends from Daylesford to Seymour and Mansfield, from Anglesea in the west to Wonthaggi in the east, and around the coastline. The LCC faced new challenges with the proximity to Melbourne’s population, community demands placed upon public land, and long-established land management arrangements including timber harvesting and closed water catchments. There was significant community pressure to include Melbourne’s high quality water catchments in the park system, while allowing only limited recreation access.

Unsurprisingly the range of issues led to a protracted period for development of recommendations for the Melbourne Area. The study commenced in 1971 but the LCC did not publish final recommendations until January 1977. This timeframe did however allow for the system of public land classification to be more fully developed and extensive descriptions of the categories provided in the final recommendations. To achieve multiple goals the LCC recommended a new category of multi-purpose park for land in the Yarra Valley (113,000 ha). However, no recommendations for multi-purpose parks were accepted by government.

Much of the Melbourne Area has been reviewed by the LCC in two districts – District 1 west of the Hume Highway and District 2 to the east (completed in 1987 and 1994 respectively). Land in the inner city was not included in the original investigation or the reviews. The inner metropolitan area was later reviewed in VEAC’s Metropolitan Melbourne Investigation (2008-2011).

The former *Land Conservation Act 1970* excluded Crown land in cities, towns and boroughs until 1989, and from 1989 to 1997 excluded Crown land in cities and rural cities. This referred to municipalities proclaimed as cities, rural cities, towns and boroughs under the Local Government Act, rather than their status as a parish or township in Crown land descriptions. The *Environment Conservation Council Act 1997* removed the 'cities and rural cities' exclusion from investigations.

Various municipalities have changed their status over time; some municipal restructures occurred between original studies and later reviews, or even during the investigation period. Due to such changes, there are several locations around the outskirts of the original Melbourne Area that were not included in the LCC's subsequent reviews in District 1 and District 2.

Some 8035 hectares of public land remains subject to Melbourne Area Study Final Recommendations (1977) because of municipal status changes between the original study and the reviews. These are described below. Other small boundary changes also excluded small areas of public land from later review.

Seymour, Warragul and Cranbourne Shires were initially included in LCC's Melbourne Area District 2 Review area but became rural cities before presentation of the final recommendations in 1994.

*Geelong City, Geelong West City, Newtown City, Bellarine City, Queenscliffe Borough and South Barwon Rural City*

The inner part of Geelong and Queenscliffe Borough has not been reviewed by LCC-ECC-VEAC. Some outer areas of Geelong were included in the Melbourne Area Study (1971-77). Although the South Barwon Rural City was proclaimed in 1974, the government accepted recommendations made for this area. The outer areas of Geelong and the former Barwon South Rural City were excluded from the subsequent Melbourne Area District 1 Review.

In the Surf Coast and Greater Geelong municipalities, around 4118 hectares are subject to Melbourne Area recommendations. Most of this area is at Lake Connewarre Wildlife Reserve (3480 ha) comprising 94 per cent of the total extent of this state game reserve. Other notable reserves are the Breamlea Flora and Fauna Reserve (215 ha) which includes some 130 hectares of Crown land added after the Melbourne Study was completed, and Belmont Common (138 ha).

*Rural City of Seymour*

The area comprising the former Rural City of Seymour was established in November 1993 before being merged into the new Mitchell and Strathbogie shires in November 1994. This area was included in Melbourne Area Study and later excluded from Melbourne Area District 2 review after the draft proposals paper was released in March 1993. In the review, the final recommendations included an appendix containing the proposed recommendations. Government did not formalize these recommendations leaving the 1977 recommendations in place. Some areas were later reviewed in the ECC's Box-Ironbark Forests and Woodlands Investigation.

In this area around 2264 hectares remain subject to Melbourne Area recommendations. Most of this area is located at Tallarook State Forest (1470 ha), about a third of the total state forest area, Snobs Creek Wildlife Reserve (240 ha), Hughes Creek Flora Reserve (130 ha), Horseshoe Lagoon Flora & Fauna Reserve (46 ha) and Dabyminga Bushland Reserve (120 hectares).

*Rural City of Warragul*

The former Rural City of Warragul was proclaimed in 1990 and the Melbourne Area investigation recommendations were not assessed in the Melbourne Area District 2 review in 1994. In the former rural city area – now in the Shire of Baw Baw – there is around 1554 hectares of public land retaining recommendations from 1977. Some of this area was not identified as public land or was acquired after the Melbourne Area investigation.

Major land uses retaining Melbourne Area recommendations are parts of Mount Worth State Park (740 ha) and of Crossover Regional Park (17 ha), and softwood plantations (200 ha). Ellinbank Dairy Research Station (216 ha) was recommended as Agriculture - research (contemporary equivalent is

uncategorised public land) and remains reserved as a 'research and educational centre for dairying and agriculture'.

Areas not included in the Melbourne Area 1977 recommendations are Rokeby Flora Reserve (9 ha), reserved in 1979 as a 'site for the preservation of native plants' and around 147 hectares of softwood plantation adjoining Mount Worth.

#### *City of Cranbourne*

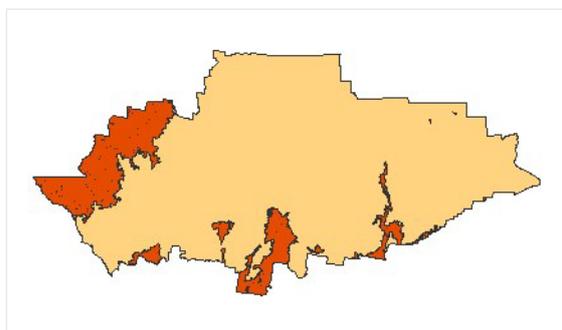
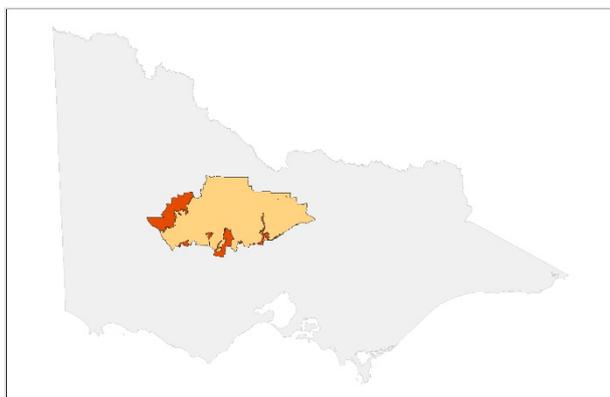
In April 1994 the Shire of Cranbourne was declared a city. The LCC had already decided its final recommendations for this part of the Melbourne Area District 2 and included these in an appendix to the report published in July 1994. Government did not formalise acceptance of these recommendations leaving the 1977 recommendations in place.

Subsequently this area was included in the new cities of Casey and Cardinia. These areas were later reviewed in VEAC's Metropolitan Melbourne Investigation.

#### **Summary of recommendations that require review**

Melbourne Area has dispersed blocks of remaining recommendations from 1977. For this small area, a detailed description of major land units, superseded recommendations, and areas that require review for this small area has not been provided.

## North Central Area



The map on the left depicts the extent of this LCC investigation area (land remaining unreviewed is red, the area reviewed after 1983 is pale orange). The unreviewed public land is shown as black in the map on the right.

### LCC original investigation area extent (hectares)

<b>Total</b>	<b>1,934,434 hectares</b>
<b>Public land only</b>	<b>315,384 hectares</b>
<b>Remaining unreviewed public land area (hectares)</b>	<b>4805 hectares</b>

### Area of excluded public land use categories (hectares)

State forest	157
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<b>Assessment area</b>	<b>4648 hectares</b>
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This area is located on a major gold province in the undulating central Victorian hills and plains from Horsham eastwards to include Stawell, Bendigo and Nagambie. Comprising mostly dry open forests on low fertility soils, public land here is fragmented and forms around 15 per cent of the overall area.

Final recommendations were published in February 1981. Key recommendations were the establishment of five state parks and four regional parks, hardwood production areas (158,030 ha) and 25 flora and fauna reserves (18,200 ha). Provisions were made to permit recreational gold fossicking in areas of some parks.

This area was not reviewed by the LCC; however most of the recommendations were replaced by those in the ECC Box-Ironbark Forests & Woodlands (2001) and VEAC River Red Gum Forests (2008) investigations. Those 4800 hectares that remain unreviewed are located along the margins of the investigation area in a section of the Wimmera plains between Glenorchy and Donald, near Clunes to Carisbrook, and a plains area from Mitiamo to north of Bendigo. Some 157 hectares of state forest located at Clunes Common was part of an area recommended as uncommitted land by the LCC. The remaining area of the original uncommitted land recommendation has been replaced by the Clunes Common Nature Conservation Reserve (215 ha) established in 2001.

The main public land categories for areas retaining North Central Area recommendations are water production (1055 ha) and wildlife areas (852 ha). The main land units are Lake Cope Wildlife Reserve and associated swamps (252 ha), Middle Swamp Wildlife Reserve at Clunes (301 ha), Merin Merin Swamp Wildlife Reserve (161 ha with another 45 ha in the Box-Ironbark Forests & Woodlands Investigation area), Mount Beckworth Scenic Reserve (628 ha) and Mount Greenock Geological Reserve (146 ha). The main water production storages are parts of the extensive Cairn Curran

Reservoir (388 ha of more than 2090 hectares), Lake Batyo Catyo (260 ha) and Tandarra Reservoir (183 ha).

Bradshaw Swamp Wildlife Reserve (196 ha) located north west of Maryborough was not public land at the time of the North Central Area investigation and in 2002 was classified as a nature conservation reserve under the Wildlife Act.

### Summary of recommendations that require review

North Central Area has dispersed blocks of remaining recommendations from 1981. For this small and fragmented area, a detailed description of major land units, superseded recommendations, and areas that require review for this small area has not been provided.

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