



Recovery Update

Welcome to the seventh edition of the Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority's community newsletter, Recovery Update. This regular newsletter will provide important information for bushfire affected communities. We hope you find it useful and informative.

COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD

Every Sunday, 2.30pm to 3.30pm

Group talk session

St Thomas Anglican Church, Maroondah Highway, Buxton

This group talk session will be lead by registered psychologists, Margaret Rea and Jocelyn Allen, and engage in the exchange of experiences, thoughts and feelings about the bushfires.

For more information call Margaret Rea on 5774 7417.

Every Sunday, 7pm – Tai Chi classes

Wandong Community Centre, LB Davern Reserve, Dry Creek Crescent

Tai Chi classes are being offered free to bushfire affected people. The cost is \$10 per session for other attendees.

For bookings call Vicki Katte on 5782 1765.

First Sunday of the month

Open Mic and Jam Session

Flowerdale Hotel, 3325 Whittlesea – Yea Road, Flowerdale

A day for musicians of all ages with a \$100 prize for "Best Musician of the Day".

For more information call 5780 1230.

Saturday 18 July, 10am to 4pm

Shire of Yarra Ranges – Rebuild,

Regenerate, Renew Expo

Lilydale Showgrounds, 27-29 Market Street, Lilydale

The Shire of Yarra Ranges is hosting an Expo to provide residents (bushfire affected and others considering renovation) with the opportunity to speak to building experts, local contractors and suppliers to assist them through the rebuilding process. Alternatively, if you are in the building industry and would like to register your interest in exhibiting at the Expo, please email m.black@yarraranges.vic.gov.au or call Mandy Black on 9294 6307.

Sunday 19 July, 11am to 4pm

Flowerdale Community Planning Day

Flowerdale Community Hall (site of the

Flowerdale Community Service Hub),

Yea-Whittlesea Road

The Flowerdale Community Planning Day will develop a shared vision and future directions for the rebuilding of Flowerdale, and important rebuilding projects including the kindergarten and the community house will be discussed.

Boost for Blokes

The Victorian Government has recently announced \$173,000 in grants to build new Men's Sheds in five communities affected by the bushfires.

These sheds will provide a relaxed place for men to make new friends, talk things over, learn new skills and get involved in the local community.

Men's Sheds have benefits for individual health and wellbeing as well as helping the wider community by involving men in community projects - such as making benches for public areas, building cubby houses for the local kindergarten or toys for local families.

As well as giving men somewhere to get together and work, the sheds link men to information and services for a range of health and well-being issues - which they often don't actively seek out themselves.

The planning day is open to all community members and childcare will be provided, so please contact the Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority (The Authority) in advance so we can ensure your child is looked after.

To register your interest for the planning day contact Kim Fawcus at kim.fawcus@dpc.vic.gov.au or call the Authority on 03 9092 5875.

Saturday 1 August to Friday 28 August

Viewing of Draft Fire Operations Plans

Your local DSE office

The Draft Fire Operations Plans for 2009/10 – 2011/12 for all districts will be available for viewing from 1 to 28 August.

The Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) together with its partner agencies prepare Fire Operations Plans for Victoria's parks and forests.

Planned burns and other fire prevention works such as strategic fuelbreaks are nominated and approved through this annual Fire Operations Planning process.

It's important to understand that planned burns don't prevent bushfires, but they do minimise the risk of intense bushfires which threaten communities and assets.

If you'd like to view and comment on the draft plan for your district visit your local DSE office; call 136 186 or visit www.dse.vic.gov.au

Wednesday 5 August, 6.30pm to 9pm

Community Recovery – An evening with Dr

Rob Gordon

Mirboo North Shire Hall, 30 Ridgway, Mirboo North

Come and attend a lecture by Dr Rob Gordon, a clinical psychologist who specialises in the management of people's emotional response to disasters. A regular lecturer at the Australian Emergency Management Institute, Rob understands the challenges and complexities facing people who have been through a traumatic event such as the February bushfires. He will explain how such an event impacts on people and reflect on the rebuilding of the community. Entry is by gold coin donation to cover the cost of the hall and will include a light supper at 6.30pm. Car parking entry is via Burchell Lane.

To attend please RSVP to Liz Craig on 0437 958 713 or Lindsay Oates on 0408 343 531 by Monday 3 August.

Thursday 20 August, 12pm to 3pm

Grassroots Grants

The five Men's Sheds will be funded as part of the Victorian Government's \$4 million investment in Men's Sheds and will be used to build new facilities and to renovate or redevelop an existing building for a shed.

Funding has been allocated for Men's Sheds in the following areas:

- Churchill Men's Shed - \$15,430 to redevelop an existing facility
- Bendigo Men's Shed at Long Gully - \$50,000 to construct a new shed
- Kinglake Ranges Men's Shed - \$50,000 to construct a new shed
- Traralgon South District Men's Shed - \$50,000 to construct a new shed
- Coleraine Men's Shed - \$7200 to redevelop an existing facility

Kinglake Ranges Community Dining, adjacent to Kinglake Harvest Café, 10 Main Road, Kinglake

Come and learn about the best way to set up your community group, association or organisation for success through grant funding. The workshop will cover a variety of areas including preparing research for your submission, how to build relationships, preparing your submission, managing the project and what happens when the project is over.

Workshop numbers are strictly limited so please secure your place in the Grassroots Grants workshop by Friday 17 July.

Email nigelpolak@hotmail.com to register including your name, contact, phone number and name of your organisation and the project for which your group would like to receive funding. (eg, equipment, an event, a plan)

For more information call Will Polak on 03 5786 1820 or email nigelpolak@hotmail.com

Sunday September 13

Degani Kinglake Ride

Novice, recreational and regular cyclists are invited to enjoy some of the best riding country Victoria has to offer. Starting and finishing at the Whittlesea Showgrounds, both the 120km and 70km rides will wind their way through tree-lined country roads before giving way to the rolling hills of the magnificent Kinglake National Park.

For more information visit

www.supersprint.com.au

Need Help With Tax?

If you have been affected by the bushfires the Australian Tax Office (ATO) can help with any concerns you might have about tax, including:

- fast tracking refunds
- giving you extra time to pay debts
- giving you more time to meet activity statement, income tax and other lodgement obligations
- helping to reconstruct tax records where documents have been destroyed, and make reasonable estimates where necessary
- helping you if you are experiencing serious hardship.

To contact the ATO:

- phone 1300 304 975 between 8am and 6pm, Monday to Friday
- visit www.ato.gov.au

Alternatively, staff in your local community service hub can arrange an appointment for you with an ATO officer.

Stay informed

The Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority is committed to keeping people informed about the latest developments in the recovery effort.

You can stay up-to-date by registering for the SMS service. Send an SMS with the words 'Update' and your postcode to 13 46 88, standard SMS charges apply to the initial registration SMS. (This service is not available on the Vodafone and 3 networks).

If you are on the Vodafone or 3 networks, you can register by sending an email to yoursay@dpc.vic.gov.au or call 1800 240 667. Please provide the postcode of the fire affected area you would like information about.



Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority



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A Word from the Chair

As I continue to visit the areas and people who have been affected by the February bushfires, I am encouraged by people's resilience and their determination to rebuild their lives and communities.

The rebuilding process is no easy feat – however we are committed to working closely with communities to plan for their futures in the short, medium and longer terms.

We understand that people heal at their own pace and in their own way. While some people are moving ahead with their rebuilding plans, we appreciate others are still grappling with whether or not they will rebuild and return to the area.

As people work through their rebuilding options many are still finalising their temporary accommodation requirements.

I'm pleased to report that earlier this month, the first residents moved into the Kinglake Temporary

Village. There are also Temporary Villages established in Flowerdale and Marysville.

There is still capacity within the two Temporary Villages at Kinglake and Flowerdale for those re-considering their interim accommodation options. If you're interested you should speak with your Case Manager or housing worker at your local Community Service Hub. We are also looking at establishing temporary accommodation in Whittlesea.

I encourage everyone to consider their temporary accommodation options carefully, as in many cases these arrangements will be required for at least 12 months, and perhaps even as long as two years.

I recognise that this can be a challenging time, but remember you are not alone – assistance is available and there are many reasons for you to be optimistic about the future.

Mending Fences

The State Government is providing financial assistance to landowners who sustained damage to fences from bushfires or fire suppression activity in the February bushfires.

This assistance includes:

- **Damage to fences caused by fire agencies machinery**

Government will repair or pay 100 per cent restoration costs of fences destroyed or damaged on private land as a result of machinery used in the control of bushfires by fire suppression agencies (this includes damage to fences to enable access by emergency vehicles).

- **Fire control lines**

Government will fully fund the repair of fire control lines created as part of bushfire suppression activities, regardless of the origin of the bushfire. This includes the re-establishment of top soil and undertaking of erosion control measures so that the landholder can replant pasture or trees. Government will also provide pasture seed for the re-sowing of pasture by the landholder where the control line was established.

- **Damage to fences adjoining Crown land (national parks, state forests and reserves) by bushfire**

Government will reimburse reasonable insurance excess to a maximum of \$400 on all insured Crown land boundary fences destroyed or damaged by bushfires regardless of the tenure of the land where that fire originated. If you have a 'no excess' policy you will also be eligible for reimbursement. Government will also repair or replace crown land boundary fences burnt by the fire agencies undertaking backburning during a bushfire emergency.

To access any of the help above, please call the Victorian Bushfire Information Line on 1800 240 667. For more information visit www.dse.vic.gov.au

In addition to the assistance provided for fencing by the Department of Sustainability and Environment and Department of Primary Industries, the Victorian Government has announced assistance for businesses and primary producers directly impacted by the 2009 bushfires.

The assistance package comprises:

- A one-off grant of up to \$5000 for immediate repair and restoration costs, with additional funds available up to a total of \$25,000 for eligible businesses with damage
- A low-cost loan scheme through the Rural Finance Corporation
- Free access to professional business advice and counselling services.

The grants aim to assist businesses with immediate repair and restoration costs, which may include the hire of tools, equipment, fencing repairs, materials, trades and services.

For more information call the Rural Finance Corporation on 1800 255 925.

The Victorian Farmers Federation is also coordinating volunteers to assist farmers with fencing, and this offer ends 1 September.

If you would like to sign up for fencing assistance or wish to be a volunteer please call the State Fencing Coordinator on 1300 822 833.

Arts Grants to Support Bushfire Recovery

Following the devastation of February bushfires, the State Government introduced grants for small arts projects during the early recovery phase.

Grants of up to a maximum of \$2500 are available to support local artists to work in their communities on projects that contribute to the recovery effort.

Applications are now open and close on the first of each month until September.

For more information, visit www.rav.net.au/funding-and-resources or call Regional Arts Victoria Toll Free (country Victoria only) on 1800 819 803.

Material Aid Relocation Update

A number of material aid distribution centres in Whittlesea and Marysville have recently changed locations as detailed below.

Whittlesea Goods have been transferred from the temporary material aid distribution centre located at the Whittlesea Showgrounds to the long-term Regional Distribution facility and shopfront at Oldfield Road, Pheasant Creek (the old Chocolate Factory).

Marysville A site was secured for a material aid centre in Marysville and all material aid

Tune Into the Latest Reconstruction and Recovery Updates

Residents of Kinglake and surrounding areas are reminded that the Chair of the Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority, Christine Nixon appears live on ABC Kinglake Ranges every Friday morning at 9am.

Christine talks to Simon Rogers about the current work of the Authority and the latest announcements regarding grants, reconstruction and community planning days.

Broadcasting to Kinglake/Kinglake West and the surrounding towns of Dixon's Creek, Flowerdale and Strathewen, the station also offers a daily breakfast program presented by Simon Rogers from 6.15am to 10am weekdays.

This program covers the area's latest rebuilding and recovery news.

ABC Kinglake Ranges is located at 94.5 FM and anyone can listen to the program via a live stream at www.abc.net.au/victoria/kinglake-3763/



stock currently in Narbethong and Buxton was recently transferred to the new location at 833 Buxton Road, approximately 200 metres from the temporary village.

The new Marysville material aid centre is now open.

The relocation of these centres will not compromise the provision of any existing services or the availability of material.

All existing volunteers to these centres assist in the staffing of the long-term facilities.



Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority

Guide To Temporary Housing Options

A new guide has been developed to help ensure people have appropriate housing throughout the rebuilding process.

Created by the Department of Human Services, Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority, Victorian Building Commission and Municipal Association of Victoria, the *Guide to Temporary Housing Options for People Affected by the Bushfires* includes the latest information on temporary housing.

Topics include the range of accommodation options available for those who lost their homes in the February bushfires, the costs associated with temporary accommodation, information for those already living on their property and more.

The range of accommodation options available to those who lost their homes vary in cost and location.

The guide is available at Community Service Hubs, through case managers and housing workers at local council offices and online at www.dhs.vic.gov.au

You can also talk to your case manager or call the Victorian Bushfire Accommodation Line on 1800 006 468.



Marysville and Triangle Phoenix Workshop

The Marysville and triangle communities have continued the process for rebuilding their communities after the bushfires.

The process started with the Celebration Day held in Marysville on 3 May where the community started to imagine a new future for Marysville and triangle communities.

The second step in the process was the Marysville and Triangle Phoenix Workshop which was held from 25 to 28 June to commence the planning process.

The Phoenix Workshop was sponsored by the Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority, with the Murrindindi Shire Council and the Marysville and Triangle Development Group, and with support from the Australian Children's Trust.

More than 110 people attended the workshop, which developed concepts for the design framework and generated many ideas for discussion.

Some of the key ideas include:

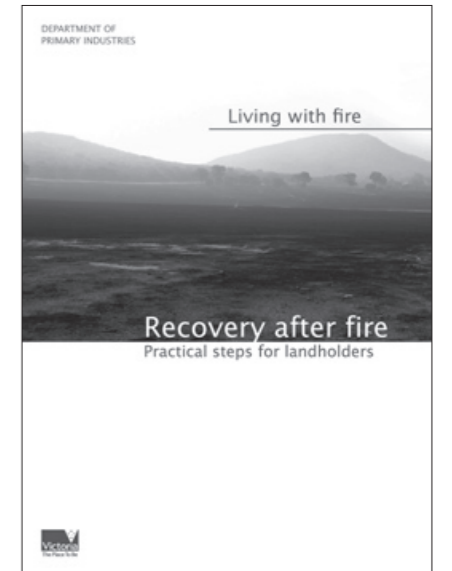
- linking the communities of the Triangle—Marysville, Narbethong, Granton, Buxton and Taggerty - with an improved pathway system that can be used by locals, as well as provide a tourism attractor for hikers, bikers and horseback riding

Handy Guide for Landowners

The Department of Primary Industries has released a Recovery After Fire, Practical Steps for Landholders booklet, which contains valuable information to assist primary producers and landholders get back to business after the emergency vehicles have pulled out.

Each chapter contains suggested actions in the critical areas of personal wellbeing and financial support; livestock and water management; soil and pasture recovery; fencing and property planning; and pest control. Sources and references to further information are also provided in footnotes.

To download a copy of the publication visit www.dpi.vic.gov.au or call the Department of Primary Industries Customer Service Centre on 136 186.



Kinglake Community Engagement Workshop

The Kinglake Ranges Recovery Advisory Group will be hosting a community engagement workshop at the Kinglake Indoor Sports Stadium, 1 Extons Road, Kinglake from 10am to 4pm on Sunday 19 July.

The planning day will be broken into small group sessions.

The morning session will recognise and celebrate Kinglake Ranges including discussing what makes the area special as well as the community's vision to carry the community forward.

The afternoon session will look at identifying ideas, what needs to happen to carry the vision forward and achieving the ideal place.

Groups will also discuss a number of issues including houses, jobs, business, shops, tourism, accommodation, forestry, education, health, land care and sport and recreation.

With more than 300 participants expected, organisers are looking for up to 30 volunteer facilitators.

The role of the facilitator is to keep people focused on the nominated issues and thinking constructively.

Facilitators will be required to attend a Volunteer Facilitator training session on Saturday 18 July from 1pm to 4pm.

If you are interested in being a volunteer facilitator email cath.peterson@dpc.vic.gov.au or call 0400 572 630.

- rebuilding the main street with a compact cluster of retail stores, whilst maintaining the trees, quirkiness, variety and village atmosphere
- strengthening the heart of Marysville township as a focus for the community and visitors
- building a community learning, health and recreation hub on the existing primary school site including facilities for a primary school, kindergarten, maternal and child health, community health and local doctor, and recreation facilities
- establishing an anchor business such as a

conference and accommodation venue to bring visitors into the town and create jobs for local residents.

These ideas will inform the development of an Urban Design Framework for Marysville with reference to the broader triangle communities.

A draft Urban Design Framework is now being produced by urban design firm, RobertsDay.

Further community and stakeholder consultation will occur in early August with a final report and recommendation presented to Murrindindi Shire Council in September 2009.



Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority