

August 2007



GOULBURN VALLEY ENVIRONMENT
GROUP INC REG NO. A0021125

G.V. Environment Group NEWSLETTER

RED GUM SPECIAL EDITION

GVEG welcomes the draft proposals for River red Gum forests along the Goulburn River and the Barmah forest. The proposals include large areas of new National Parks, with a regional park around Shepparton and Mooroopna

The **Victorian Environmental Assessment Council's (VEAC)** draft proposals for the future of our River Red Gum wetland forests in northern Victoria are a great step forward for the conservation and protection of this beautiful part of the state.

VEAC released its draft proposals on Thursday, July 19, and has given the public 60 days to comment.

The draft proposals give some hope of delivering Victoria's first aboriginal co-managed parks and provide great economic opportunities for regional Victoria in protecting, managing and conserving these special places and the hundreds of threatened and near-threatened native species they support.

However, these recommendations are just drafts - not the final versions - and over the next 60 days it will be essential to encourage everyone with an interest in these areas to put forward their opinions to VEAC via its public submission process, before a final report is presented to the State Government for a decision.

This is very simple; you can email, write a letter or fax your thoughts to VEAC on the details below by September 21st :

Director

Victorian Environmental Assessment Council

Level 6/8 Nicholson Street

East Melbourne Vic 3004

By fax to: (03) 9637 8024

By email: veac@dse.vic.gov.au

The full report and summary can be downloaded by visiting www.veac.vic.gov.au

You can even download a submission form at

www.veac.vic.gov.au/riverredgum/documents/dppRRGSubmissionForm.pdf

Or you can talk to them in person at the series of public forums they will be holding over the coming weeks. These forums are listed inside this newsletter

Whilst the draft recommendations are good, they are by no means perfect. Inside is a summary of the key recommendations and the areas that we support and require strengthening.

Your submissions DO count. This is an historic opportunity for nature conservation in our region, please do not miss this opportunity.

RED GUM SPECIAL EDITION continued...

What we like about the proposals:

- We strongly support the proposals for an extra 100,000 hectares of parks and reserves.
- **A new Barmah National Park**, with co-management with aboriginal traditional owners. Barmah is part of the largest river red Gum wetland in the world and is an internationally significant
- **A new Lower Goulburn River National Park** protecting a major river forest ecosystem.
- **One third of Gunbower in a new National Park**
- **New warby Ranges- Ovens River National Park** -incorporating the Warby Ranges State Park and the floodplain forests of the lower Ovens River
- **A new Leaghur-Koorangie National Park** in the Loddon and Avoca River floodplains west and south of Kerang
- **A larger Murray Sunset National Park** in north west Victoria, west of Mildura
- **A new Nyah Vinifera Park**, co-operatively managed by aboriginal traditional owners near Swan Hill.
- **Murray River Park**- Incorporating River Murray Reserves, regional parks and other public land
- **4000 GL of environmental water for Victorian floodplain forests** in the study area with a release of the water every 5 years
- **The exclusion of stock grazing across public land** and a five year phase out of grazing on public land water frontages.
- **Changes to National Parks Act** to allow co-management and amendments recommended to allow hand back/lease pack of National Parks to Traditional owners (anywhere in Vic)

What we do not like about the proposals:

- **There is inadequate protection for the internationally significant Gunbower forest wetlands**, with around 70% still open for logging
- There should be a **greater commitment to a hand back and lease back** of the proposed Barmah National Park
- **There should be recommendations for an immediate end to logging in proposed parks** to prevent any further loss of biodiversity.
- There should be a greater emphasis on the **implications of climate change** and the need for larger, better connected protected areas and more water.
- **The role of forestry agencies in the study area should be reviewed** following finding by VEAC that DSE have been significantly over logging areas in an unsustainable manner*.
- We recommend **a complete phase out of all public land logging within 8 years**, with appropriate support to affected communities and investment in infrastructure to improve tourism.
- There needs to be strong recommendations for development of a **private sector agro-forestry industry** on cleared private land.

*The report found that figures provided by DSE showed that there has been over cutting sawlogs in River Red Gum forests by up to 60 per cent due to lack of growth rates from lack of flooding. They estimate that a base case (without new parks) would see logging reduced by around 60 percent.

This information is available on the VNPA website and is endorsed by GVEG. Go to www.redgum.org.au or www.vnpa.org.au

Community forums will give interested people a chance to discuss the proposals with VEAC councilors and staff.

GVEG encourages as many members as possible to attend forums next week to let VEAC know what you think. GVEG Coordinator Nick Roberts is happy to

discuss the proposals with you and clarify any comments you may have, call him on 58 317794.

It is important that the Shepparton and Nathalia meetings hear voices from those interested in conservation, and if you have any family or friends near the other meetings, tell them too!

Location	Venue	Address	Date
Shepparton	Shepparton Golf Course	Golf Links Drive, Shepparton	Monday 6 August
Cohuna	Gannawarra Shire Council Building (Old Council Chamber room)		Tuesday 7 August
Echuca	Comfort Resort Echuca Moama	54-56 Meninya Street Moama NSW	Wednesday 8 August
Nathalia	To be advised		Monday 13 August
Mildura	Quality Motel Mildura	Seventh St, Mildura	Tuesday 14 August
Swan Hill	To be advised		Wednesday 15 August
Wangaratta	The Old Town 'n' Country Tavern	Cnr Greta Rd & Mason St	Thursday 16 August
ALL FORUMS RUN FROM 3PM to 7 PM			

-GVEG 2007 AGM-

- When?** Thursday September 20th
- Where?** Greater Shepparton Business Centre, New Dookie Road, Shepparton (east of sale yards)
- Time?** 7pm

Special Guest speaker- Shepparton's answer to Al Gore-John Pettigrew: Orchardist, environmentalist, community leader and climate change advocate.

Come and hear from John extracts from his Australian version of **An Inconvenient Truth** presentation about the impacts on global warming and climate change on the local , regional and global climate.

GVEG and Dhurringile and District Landcare Group Tree planting day

- **Sunday 26th august on Orr road West of Tatura/ Murchison Road (tentatively.)**
- **Starting at 10am until midday**
- **Contact John Laing on 250265363**

Bring the Family, get involved!

2007/2008 Memberships now due...

Last year, we resolved to change our process for membership renewal to standard due date at the beginning of each financial year.

Feedback from members and occasional confusion within our own book-keeping has led to this decision which is designed to stream line our membership renewal process.

Each year we will send out notice of renewals around the end of the financial year. Your prompt attention to this matter is greatly appreciated to assist GVEG in continuing the good work into the future.

This year's membership fees are unchanged from the previous year.

Additionally, any donations over \$2 in addition to the membership fees are tax deductible

Cost of Membership

Individual:	\$20
Family:	\$25
<i>Concession:</i>	
(pensioner, student)	\$10
Organisation (\$35..\$50..\$100)	\$___
<i>Donation</i>	
(Amounts over \$2 tax deductible)	\$___
Total amount enclosed:	\$___

Donations over \$2.00 are tax deductible

All amounts payable to the Goulburn Valley Environment Group.

Cut out this form and Please mail to:

PO Box 2073nShepparton VIC 3632

YOUR NAME: _____

YOUR ADDRESS: _____

**GOULBURN VALLEY ENVIRONMENT
GROUP INC REG NO. A0021125**

PO Box 2073
Shepparton
Vic. 3632

Ph/Fax(03)58317794
E-mail gveg@mcmedia.com.au

*'Protecting the Environment for
Generations to Come'*

**GVEG meets on the third Thursday
of every month
Contact 58 317794 for info.**

**Please Note: Your membership may be
due, if you have paid– many thanks, if
not we need your support:**

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Organisation (\$35..\$50..\$100)	\$___
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Group.*

Please mail to:

PO Box 2073

Shepparton VIC 3632

Your Committee

President:

Doug Robinson

Vice– President:

(Vacant)

Secretary:

Michael Lea-Whyte

Treasurer:

Esther Costa

Committee:

Helen Reynolds

Nick Roberts

Louise Anderson

Sharon Terry

Karen Brisbane

John Laing

Terry Court

The Goulburn Valley Environment Group Inc.
Is a community group with members throughout
the lower Goulburn and Broken Valleys in
northern Victoria.