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Supporting the community post-bushfire

On the 9th January a grassfire started north of Streatham and travelled in an easterly direction through Carranballac and south of Skipton. The fire covered 19,300 hectares, and unfortunately burnt 59 structures including 18 houses and there were significant livestock losses.

Indicative damage to environmental assets, include:

- Around 13.1 km's of waterways impacted along Mt Emu Creek, and 2.3 km's along Fiery Creek,
- A small number of wetland stewardship sites impacted
- A some recently restored Friends of the Forgotten Woodlands seed production areas impacted.

The CMA attended community and agency meetings associated with the fire to offer appropriate immediate on-ground support. The CMA has been working with local Landcare facilitators to prioritise support requests.

To date, the CMA's drought crew through the Drought Employment Program has helped establish and repair three stock containment areas and remove around three kilometres of fire damaged fencing across four landholder sites. The CMA were recently notified regarding emergency response funding and will be rolling out a recovery program over the coming 12 months.

World first Glenelg Freshwater Mussel release!

Offspring from an Australian-first Glenelg Freshwater Mussel conservation program have been released into the Crawford River in southwest Victoria in what was a world-first restocking of the species in its last remaining habitat in late January.

The release is the first ever undertaken for the critically endangered species only found in waterways in south-west Victoria and is a significant milestone in a recovery project being undertaken by Glenelg Hopkins CMA, Victorian Fisheries Authority (VFA), the Arthur Rylah Institute and Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation. The Building (Glenelg Freshwater) Mussels project is funded by the Australian Government's Saving Native Species Program and is a two-year \$490,000 project which is delivering on-ground works around creating habitat in waterways and a captive breeding program in the VFA's Snobs Creek Conservation Hatchery to reverse the decline of the species.

The release of juvenile captive-bred mussels and adult mussels collected as part of the project from the Crawford River last year, was undertaken by Budj Bim Rangers from the Winda-Mara Aboriginal Corporation, VFA and Glenelg Hopkins CMA.

"It's really very exciting to get a point in this project where not only have mussels been found and taken into captivity, but they have been successfully bred in the conservation hatchery, and now those offspring can be returned to their native waterways where we have undertaken revegetation, fencing and sediment control works to ensure a healthy environment for them to return to and hopefully thrive in," Glenelg Hopkins CMA CEO Adam Bester said.

"Our Snobs Creek Conservation Hatchery was the first to breed these precious mussels last year, so it's exciting to see the offspring from those efforts boosting numbers in the wild," VFA CEO Travis Dowling said.

Glenelg freshwater mussels live for up to 10 years, including an early-life stage spent as a parasite living on the fins and gills of small-bodied native fish, enabling their movement through the river system.

They are only found in the sandy riverbeds of waterways in south-west Victoria and as filter feeders, their greatest threat to survival is sedimentation of those waterways through river-bank erosion, and fire ash deposits.

To find out more about the Glenelg Freshwater Mussel project visit www.ghcma.vic.gov.au



Releasing the baby Glenelg Freshwater Mussels in the Crawford River in a world-first for the critically endangered species (L-R) Lashay Blurton, Budj Bim Ranger from Winda-Mara Aboriginal Corporation; Sam Fawke, Senior Technical Officer at the VFA Snob's Creek Conservation Hatchery; and Tim Covey, Senior Waterways Officer, Glenelg Hopkins CMA.

CMA NEWS:

Celebrating the cultural significance of wetlands

Glenelg Hopkins CMA staff, staff from Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Corporation and Budj Bim Rangers from the Winda-Mara Aboriginal Corporation together with Aunty Eileen Alberts, Gunditjmara Elder, took a stroll in and around the wetlands and shores of the Glenelg Estuary Discovery Bay Ramsar site for World Wetlands Day on Monday (February 2) which had a theme in 2026 of 'Wetlands and Traditional Knowledge: celebrating cultural heritage'. The event was focused on learning about the natural and cultural significance of the area, the combined management activities undertaken on the Ramsar site, and the importance of the spectacular dune slack wetlands and southern ocean shores, which play host to large populations of migratory shorebirds each year.



Keep up to date with what we're up to at the CMA!



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Hands on water learning for SW TAFE students

South West TAFE Diploma of Conservation and Ecosystem Management students took to the waters edge in Warrnambool to learn all about citizen science and hands-on water quality testing.

Students learned about various aspects of the statewide EstuaryWatch citizen science program, along with the dynamics and management of our critically important intermittently closed estuaries.

See more of their activities [here](#)



Swamp stewardships for NE Volcanic Plains now open

Do you live in the North Eastern Volcanic Plains area?

Do you have swamps or wetlands on your farm? Want to know more about them? How to manage them? You could get paid to do that.

The Glenelg Hopkins CMA's Our Catchments Our Communities (OCOC) project can help with that through partnerships to support stewardship of temporary or seasonal swamps.

The North Eastern Volcanic Plains is a productive farming area in a landscape of swamps. Swamps are the sumps of the farm, providing drainage, summer green pick and habitat for broilgas, frogs and other animals as well as beneficial insects. Healthy swamps can be part of a productive farm, and with the right support this can be easily achieved.

Funding is available to farmers who own property in the North Eastern Volcanic Plains area (see website for map area) to manage their temporary swamps. The support is for assessing and better understanding the swamps on your farm and through to financial incentives for swamp management and/or restoration.

EOIs are now open and close on Friday, April 13, 2026. For more information visit www.ghcma.vic.gov.au



Planning for large scale woody weed control around Heywood

Large scale woody weed control works along Killara/Darlot Creek and the Palawarra/Fitzroy River are planned for 2026 as part of the Budj Bim Connections Flagship Project.

The complex and difficult to access willow infestations at Tyrendarra and Homerton on Darlot Creek/Killara have been identified in a willow feasibility study as key areas for control to improve waterway health.

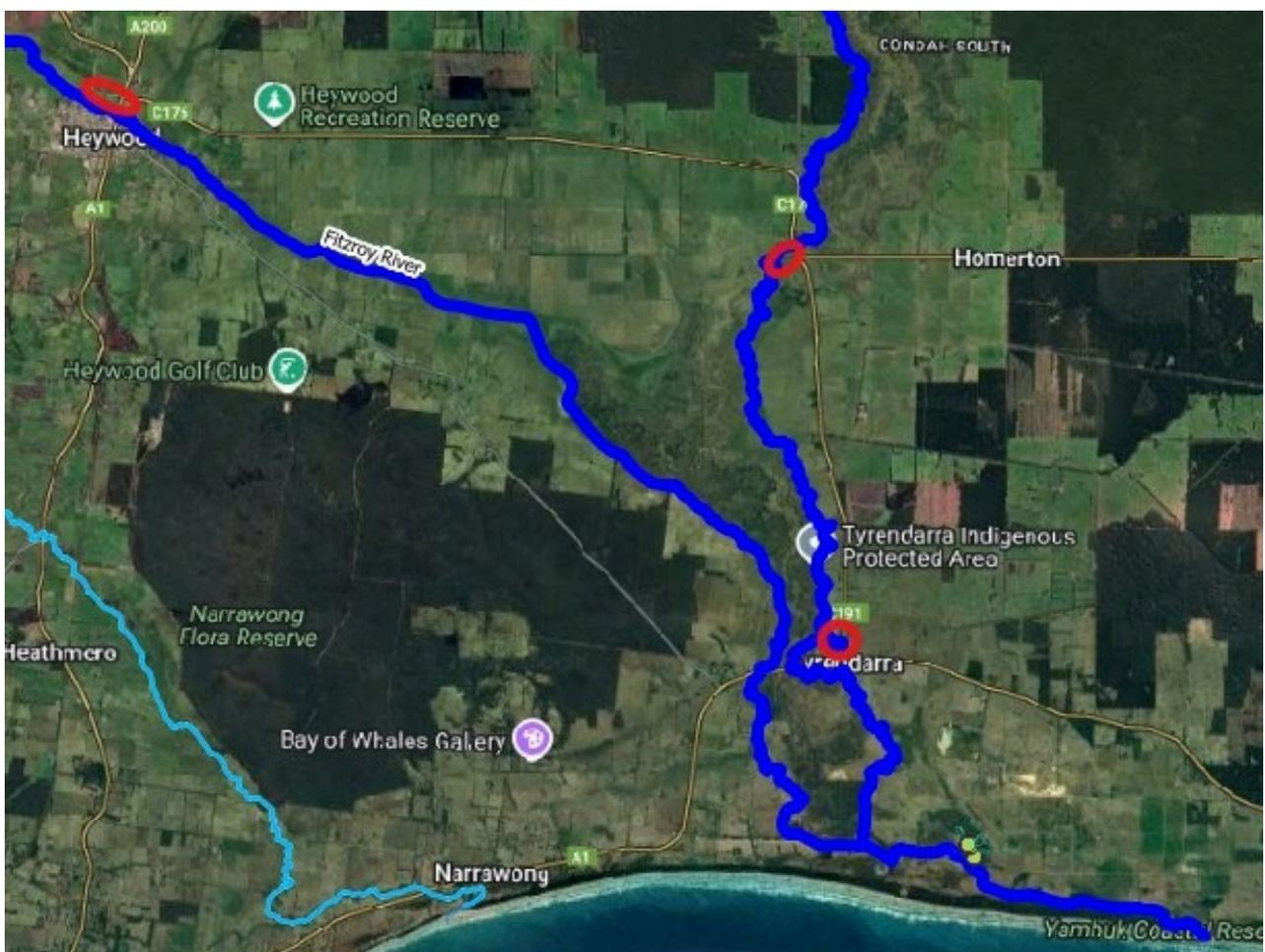
Willows spread their roots through the bed of waterways, absorbing and slowing water flow and raising the bed level. Dense thickets cause water to often break bank and flood adjacent areas which can cause erosion. Being non-native and deciduous, the leaves create a rise in organic matter when they drop in Autumn, reducing water quality and oxygen levels in the water which threatens the survival of native aquatic plants and animals.

Some willows can spread via seed, however most spread by fragments of stems or branches breaking and growing new root systems in wet areas. Removal will prevent further spread of the willow infestations and protect waterway health across the significant Budj Bim Cultural Landscape.

Site rehabilitation will take place following willow removal and will include monitoring of the stumps, further weed control of any other species present, as well as revegetation with native species when feasible.

The site on the Fitzroy River/Palawarra at Heywood includes stage 2 and 3 of weed control works that began in 2024 through the township area. Originating in response to community request for support, this includes control of a range of weeds such as willows, ash, poplars, gorse, hawthorn and blackberry.

For more information, contact Tania Parker on 5571 2526 or t.parker@ghcma.vic.gov.au



Victorian Landcare Grants open for 2026

The Victorian Government Landcare Grants are now open until 23 April 2026 with \$3.55 million available to support volunteers in caring for the state's landscapes and biodiversity.

The Victorian Government is providing funding to support Landcare and environmental volunteer groups/networks with on-ground works, community education and engagement activities, group/network development projects that: protect and restore the natural environment; expand participation and engage new and diverse volunteers; enhance knowledge and understanding of the natural environment; support recovery from natural disasters; recognise Traditional Owners' longstanding connection to Country and support Traditional Owners aspirations in healing and ongoing care for Country and culture; and sustain and develop groups/networks

The grants are open to environmental volunteer groups and networks, including Landcare groups and networks, Friends groups, Conservation Management Networks, Committees of Management, Coastcare groups and Aboriginal groups.

Project Grants of up to \$20,000 are available for on-ground works, community education and engagement, and group/network development activities that protect or improve natural assets such as native vegetation, native fauna, waterways, wetlands and soils.

Support Grants of up to \$500 are available to assist with costs such as insurance, incorporation and operational needs.



[Visit www.ghcma.vic.gov.au for more information](http://www.ghcma.vic.gov.au)

Who to talk to when you want sustainable agriculture information

Sustainable Agriculture Facilitators (SAFs) support climate-smart, sustainable farming practices.

SAFs are locals who work with farmers, landholders, community groups and agricultural industries to promote climate-smart, sustainable farming practices.

They provide relevant information and resources and facilitate local connections to help support a more sustainable and resilient future for agriculture.

Find out more:
Visit us at www.ghcma.vic.gov.au



Follow us on social media
@ghcma
@glenelg_hopkins_cma



Free service: SAFs can be contacted directly and free of charge.

Local knowledge: Each SAF provides region-specific information and support.

National coverage: SAFs are located across Australia, hosted by Natural Resource Management (NRM) organisations.

CONTACT YOUR LOCAL SAF:
Mary Knight
ph: 0417 513 724
e: m.knight@ghcma.vic.gov.au



CMA NEWS:

Have your say on sustainable water use planning for Western Vic

Be part of the planning for sustainable water use in Victoria's west. The development of a new Western Region Sustainable Water Strategy has begun in recognition of the drought and dry conditions impacting much of western Victoria.

The strategy will cover the western third of Victoria, extending from the south-west coast, across the Wimmera and to the southern Mallee.

This includes the towns of Colac, Warrnambool, Portland, Port Campbell, Hamilton, Ouyen, Horsham, Avoca, Stawell, Ararat and Edenhope - a vast area that has a unique mix of agricultural and towns - all of which have different values for water.

Community input is an important part of understanding local feedback, concerns, opportunities, and water values.

Expressions of interest are now open for community members who have knowledge and experience in water supply and quality matters to participate in working groups to guide development of the strategy.

EOIs for roles close on March 16. Find out more information at water.vic.gov.au



Know where planned burns are taking place

Planned roadside burns have benefits that reach beyond the guide posts on our local roads. From community and driver safety, to grassland restoration and phalaris reduction, right through to upskilling CFA members.

This Autumn, more planned burns will take place to support our region.



FIND OUT MORE:

Where and when burns will take place:
plannedburns.ffm.vic.gov.au

Why its so important for grasslands:
ghcma.vic.gov.au

ENVIRO WATER NEWS:

Keeping the system connected in dry conditions

Once again, we have experienced very dry to drought conditions across large parts of the catchment and low levels of runoff into the Glenelg River. With the climate outlook not appearing to change anytime soon, we are relying heavily on Water for the Environment to keep our system running and connected. This water is delivered to help native plants and animals survive, especially during these difficult times.

Many water users would have noticed an increase in flows over the summer holidays, with the release of our first Summer fresh event that started on December 2, peaking at 220ML/d on December 9, before dropping back down to baseflows late January.

During this time, river heights rose by up to 50cm.

These baseflows continue to support the Glenelg throughout a dry January and into February. Another fresh event took place on February 10, peaking at 250ML/d on February 18 before dropping back down to baseflows by February 26.

For a more more detailed report - including gauge information for the last reporting period - click on the icon (right) to visit the Environmental Water page on our website.



Fish news:

In fish news, during ARI's recent visit to the Glenelg River for the Native Fish Report Card survey, four Estuary Perch were recorded from Fulham's Hole ranging from 27 to 32 cm. This is the first time they have been recorded in this survey this far upstream. On another interesting note, a single Australian Grayling was found at Warrock Road, making it the third sighting in the system in over 100 years. These findings support our understanding of how environmental water helps native fish by increasing connectivity in the river.

Water for the Environment benefits stock and domestic users as well as communities by increasing opportunities for recreational activities, such as fishing, boating, canoeing, kayaking and birdwatching. So, if you're interested in any of these activities, now is a great time to get out and enjoy the river!

Johnny Mullagh Cricket Match in Harrow for the Labour Day long weekend

Be sure to head on over to Harrow for the Johnny Mullagh cricket match celebrations over the Labour Day long weekend, March 8. Glenelg Hopkins CMA will be there to celebrate with you, bringing canoes and kayaks for all to jump in and enjoy the river! We have also organised an electrofishing demonstration from 11am to show you all the special fish and aquatic gems benefiting from our environmental flows! If you're lucky, you might even catch a glimpse of the Glenelg Spiny Cray!



CMA NEWS:

Extension to Bushfire recovery works - EOIs now open for more works

Glenelg Hopkins CMA has received funding to assist with the recovery needs of waterways following the 2024-25 Grampians bushfires. The CMA will target works to protect waterways and water quality, within the fire affected areas, including private land.

Funding is available to assist with priority environmental recovery works, especially where they will support the protection and recovery of waterways such as debris removal, revegetation, fencing repair or replacement, erosion control, weed management and other activities that support the restoration of fire-affected landscapes.

Landholders affected by the 2024-25 Grampians bushfires can register their interest in being assessed for recovery funding support.

Expressions of interest are welcome now and remain open until March 2026 or once available funds are committed.



How to submit an EOI

Please complete the [ONLINE FORM HERE](#)

For further details please contact either:
Bernadette Northeast on 0409 417 908 or email: b.northeast@ghcma.vic.gov.au; OR Tim Covey on 0408 177 907 or email: t.covey@ghcma.vic.gov.au

Keep up to date with what we're up to at the CMA!



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LANDCARE NEWS & LOCAL EVENTS:



Farm Mapping Workshop

No cost to attend



Click here to register or scan the QR code above

Location: Harrow Bush Nursing Centre
Date: 12th March 2026
Time: 9am-3pm
Catered event

Guest presenter:
David Hardwick, Soil Land Food



What you will learn:

- Basics of Google Earth & Google maps
- Creating map layers
- External property boundary
- Creating points, lines & polygons
- Calculating areas & lengths
- Importing layers - contours, boundaries
- Saving & sharing your map



For more information please contact Lynn Brown
Upper Glenelg Landcare Facilitator
e: vlf@wandoriverlandcare.com.au
m: 0428 067 130



This event is funded by the Glenelg Hopkins CMA and the Victorian Government through the Victorian Landcare Grants program



Paint & Sip Classes

Connecting with our Community

No cost to attend



<https://events.humanitix.com/upper-glenelg-landcare-paint-n-sip>

Pigeon Ponds

Sunday March 1st
Design: Flowering Gums

Dunrobin

Sunday May 3rd
Design: Black Cockatoo

Poolaijelo

Sunday May 10th
Design: Kookaburra

Connewirricoo

Sunday June 21st,
Design: Wattle

Take home your own Artwork!

Enjoy a fun day connecting with your friends and meeting new people

No experience needed
Materials and refreshments provided
Bookings essential!



More info: Contact Lynn Brown, Upper Glenelg Landcare Facilitator
e: vlf@wandoriverlandcare.com.au
m: 0428 067 130



SOUTHERN GRAMPIANS
EXPRESSION OF INTEREST TO FORM A
YOUTH ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL!

Aged 13-25 & passionate about the environment?

- Protect Local Wildlife & Biodiversity
- Lead Sustainability Projects
- Raise Awareness on Environmental Issues
- Advise on Green Initiatives

Gain Leadership Skills • Make a Difference in Southern Grampians!

APPLY NOW!
Fill out the Expression of Interest Form
✉ soriley@myune.edu.au

THE HARROW DISCOVERY CENTRE CELEBRATES

THE 31ST ANNUAL JOHNNY MULLAGH CHAMPIONSHIP CUP

SUNDAY 8TH MARCH 2026

JOHNNY MULLAGH OVAL HARROW



- WOOLWORTHS CRICKET BLAST | 9am
- JUNIOR MULLAGH CUP | 9:30am
- GHCMA ELECTROFISHING DISPLAY | 11am
- JOHNNY MULLAGH CUP 'MULLAGH'S' vs 'GLENELG' STARTING AT 1PM**
- HARROW DUCK RACE | 2pm
- CLASSIC CATCH COMPETITION | 2:30pm
- MULLAGH MAXIMUM HIT COMPETITION | 4pm



STEVE COGHILL LIVE AT THE HERMY FROM 5PM FREE EVENT



Employment opportunities to off-set the impact of drought in SW Victoria

The Glenelg Hopkins CMA, through the Victorian Government's Drought Employment Program, is offering casual employment opportunities through until June 2026 for people experiencing hardship because of dry conditions. These positions can work around seasonal farm commitments or existing reduced employment.

The CMA Drought Employment Program provides a way for farmers, farm workers and workers from farm-related industries impacted by hardship due to drought conditions in the Glenelg Hopkins and Corangamite CMA regions to earn an income, increase their skills and build confidence in future employment opportunities by undertaking a range of different catchment health works, like fencing, revegetation and pest and weed control.



APPLICATIONS ARE NOW OPEN for roles within the Drought Employment Program
Interested participants will need to complete an EOI found at
www.ghcma.vic.gov.au or scan the QR code

For further information, contact Craig Reid
on (03) 5571 2526 or email: craig.reid@ghcma.vic.gov.au

