



Newsletter

Wye River and Separation Creek Renewal

10 NOVEMBER 2017

This newsletter is issued by Colac Otway Shire to provide the community key updates following the fire.

Community intentions survey

Council undertook a Community Intention Survey over January/February 2017 to seek feedback from the 109 property owners where a house was destroyed in the 2015 Christmas Day fire.

A key aim of the survey was to understand whether owners are intending to rebuild and if so, when. We had a high response rate, with 80 responses received (73%) out of the 109 properties - thank you to everyone who participated.

We will be repeating this survey in the coming weeks, with Council officers calling property owners where a house was destroyed – we will be calling those who have not yet commenced construction, but will not contact those who previously indicated they would not be rebuilding.

We will be looking for information regarding whether owners are rebuilding and the reasons for your decision. This information helps Council provide support and planning services for Wye River and Separation Creek property owners and residents. Thank you in advance for your time.

Permits to Burn and Fire Hazard Inspections

To assist the community reduce fuel loads on their properties, Council's Fire Awareness Officer recently undertook a review of the permit to burn process. The aim was to streamline the processing of permits for smaller 'backyard' burns. As such, a new template for undertaking backyard burns outside the Fire Danger Period is now available on Council's website <http://www.colacotway.vic.gov.au/My-property/Fire-and-emergencies/Burning-off>

It is anticipated that as long as the Fire Awareness Officer can assess the safety of the burn, we can provide a relatively quick turnaround for these types of burn permits (the majority expected to be within 24 hours).

In consideration of residents and visitors and to maintain local amenity, it is still preferable for burning to be undertaken on Friday and Saturday between 10am and sunset as allowed for under Council's Local Law.

Burning off cannot be done inside the Fire Danger Period (FDP) at any time without a permit. The FDP is set by CFA and anticipated this year to run from the beginning of December to April, and you can stay up to date by checking <http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/warnings-restrictions/>



With the FDP approaching Council will soon be beginning its annual Fire Prevention Inspection Program to assess potential fire hazards on all properties. Where a potential fire hazard is found, property owners or occupiers will receive a Fire Prevention Notice detailing the steps that must be undertaken to reduce the hazard and potential loss of life and property. Failure to comply with these notices can result in significant penalties.

Council acknowledges and thanks a majority of residents in Colac Otway Shire who are proactive with their summer fire preparations. Being fire ready is everyone's responsibility and helps to protect our entire community. For any further questions regarding permits to burn or fire prevention issues please contact Council's Fire Awareness Officer, Tristan Crews on 5232 9473.



Dogs and koalas

Council has been notified of dogs roaming unsupervised in Wye River and Separation Creek. Of particular concern is the potential for unsupervised dogs to harm wildlife, particularly koalas that are very vulnerable in the fire affected areas.

All dog owners are legally required to have effective control of their animals, but in this fragile landscape it is particularly critical that dogs are not allowed to roam freely. Council will talk to the tradesman working in the area to make sure they are aware of the need for them to keep their dogs controlled effectively.

Council's Rangers will be patrolling the area and will take appropriate action if dogs are found wandering. If people see dogs wandering then contact Council's Compliance Unit and we will try to respond as soon as possible. The best number to call and report a wandering dog is 5232 9400.



Paddy - a well behaved, non-wandering Wye River resident dog!

Stormwater Management System

Thank you to everyone for providing feedback through two rounds of community consultation on the stormwater drainage designs. The consultation period is now over, and Cardno has completed the detailed design. We have published the final designs on WyeSep Connect website:

<http://www.colacotway.vic.gov.au/Council-the-shire/Reports-strategies-plans/Wye-River-and-Separation-Creek-Recovery-Reports>

Council has also consulted with WSKRA (formerly CRC) Flora Fauna and Beachscape Work Group with regards to stormwater drainage design Environmental Impact Statement. The Work Group consolidated all community feedback and provided a response to Council:

<http://www.colacotway.vic.gov.au/Council-the-shire/Reports-strategies-plans/Wye-River-and-Separation-Creek-Recovery-Reports>

The project has now moved into the tender process, with works separated into three contracts: 1) pits and pipes, 2) table drains, driveway culverts and ancillary works, and 3) revegetation and reinstatement.

The first two contracts; pits and pipes and table drains, driveway culverts and ancillary works are currently out to tender from Friday 27 October until 22 November. Tenders will be awarded on 13 December 2017. We expect construction to commence in late January 2018, after Australia Day.

Construction is scheduled for completion by the end of June 2018. Council will be contacting property owners in the next few months where drainage infrastructure is proposed to be located on their property.

Stanway Drive remediation update

Geotechnical services consultancy CMW Geosciences has been engaged to provide a design for the stabilisation works at Stanway Drive. Remediation works will be undertaken on the high side embankment and creek bank. We will hold a community comment period in late November on elements of the draft works (timing to be advised).

The remediation works design is scheduled for completion by the end of December. At this stage, we expect construction to commence in late January 2018, after Australia Day, and be completed by the end of June 2018.



Stanway Drive



Installation of traffic signage

In accordance with the Construction, Traffic and Environment Management Plan, Council will be installing additional traffic signage in Wye River and Separation Creek towards the end of November.

New signage will include speed limit signs; 'no stopping' signs, and 'give way' signs. As the high season approaches, Council will be monitoring adherence to traffic regulations to ensure the safety of visitors and residents.



Wye River & Separation Creek Building Forum Wrap

Approximately 100 Wye, Sep and Kennett property owners and potential owners attended the Building forum at Geelong Conference Centre on 22 October. Qualified and experienced professional experts were selected as guest speakers, to provide information on the unique issues encountered when building in the townships.

The forum covered a wide variety of topics including geotechnical information, planning applications and processes, fire awareness, house design and building, plumbing and landscaping for fire mitigation.

Feedback from those attending was very positive, with people saying they'd learnt a lot and had all their questions answered by the many experts on hand. The sit-down lunch provided was also much appreciated!

Thank you to Yvette Hill for organising this very successful event.

Photos from the Building Forum are in the next column



Review of the Wye River and Separation Creek Fire Recovery

In January 2017, Emergency Management Victoria commissioned an independent review of the Wye River and Separation Creek fire recovery activities, focussing on the experiences of residents, local business owners, community organisations, local and state government and industry.



EMV independent review cont....

The Review of the Wye River and Separation Creek Fire Recovery details the challenges faced by both government and community over the 15-month period from the day after the fire in December 2015 to March 2017. Through the review, community members had the opportunity to reflect on their and the communities recovery and provide valuable insights into how government can best collaborate with communities during future recovery events.

The three key findings focus on: Communications and community engagement; the community-centred governance model; and the role of government leaders, departments and agencies in the recovery process.

The review is at:

<https://www.emv.vic.gov.au/publications/review-of-the-wye-river-and-separation-creek-fire-recovery>



Indigenous plants

Growing Indigenous plants in fire prone landscapes

Saturday 11 November, BBQ Shed, Harrington Reserve Wye River 10.30am– 2.00pm

Join the Southern Otway Landcare Network as they partner with the community to learn how to grow a domestic Indigenous garden in a fire prone landscape. This workshop will also focus on the revegetation of a plot of land at McRae Street and support community volunteers to apply the learnings to beautify a public space.

Brad Ferrier, who has 30-years experience as a nurseryman, landscape designer and revegetation contractor, will lead these sessions. He has a keen interest in native flora and fauna and has taught botany and sustainable landscape design at RMIT and Swinburne.

There is nothing in the natural world that he's not interested in or curious about. The management and revegetation of the McRae Street block is supported by the Southern Otway Landcare Network and the Corangamite Catchment Management Authority

This is a free event and lunch will be provided. Please RSVP for catering purposes to Libby Riches, libby.landcare@soln.org or 5237 6904. For more information please see:

<http://www.colacotway.vic.gov.au/My-property/Fire-and-emergencies/WyeSep-Connect/WyeSep-News>

Trades and Services Directory

The Trades and Services Directory is now in its final stages of production. Over 50 businesses responded to the call to 'Register Your Interest' with their details to be included in the directory. A total of around two hundred businesses will now be listed in the directory, which will serve as a localised calling card for trade and service businesses located in the Wye River and Separation Creek areas.

The Directory forms the final component of the Trades and Services Event and Directory Project, which has been driven by the Community Connection and Wellbeing Work Group and made possible with the assistance from the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal and Regional Development Victoria.



The project aim is to stimulate economic recovery after the 2015 bushfires and to connect property owners who are building with the trades and service businesses located in the region. All going to plan, the directory should be available by the end of November. A printed booklet and an online copy will be made available.

Wye I love

As the seasons change, don't forget to put your photos of Wye River and Separation Creek on Instagram #wyeilove #wyewinter. Winners will be announced before Christmas – be in it for your chance to win a voucher to the Wye Beach Hotel or The Wye General.



WSKRA Inc. (Community Resilience Committee) Update

Renewing the Renewal Plan

Work has commenced on updating the Renewal Plan for Wye River and Separation Creek. The updated plan will include issues facing people in Kennett River post the fire and landslips and proposals to address them. The purpose of the plan is to continue to identify and implement initiatives to support the renewal of our area. As with the current plan, there will be wide community consultation. The process will include an evaluation of progress to date.

The draft updated Renewal Plan for Wye River, Separation Creek and Kennett River March 2018-2019 will be distributed for community consideration in December, with discussion occurring at the January Community Forum organised by the Wye River and Separation Creek Progress Association. The plan will then be finalized by mid-March 2018. The current Renewal Plan is

<http://www.colacotway.vic.gov.au/Council-the-shire/Reports-strategies-plans/Wye-River-and-Separation-Creek-Recovery-Reports>

Activities in the last month

It has been a busy month! The highlight has been the Geelong Building Forum – very well attended and jam-packed with information. Congratulations to Yvette Hill and our Community Connection and Wellbeing Work Group. See the presentations <http://www.colacotway.vic.gov.au/My-property/Fire-and-emergencies/WyeSep-Connect/Current-Projects>

Community members on the Flora, Fauna and Beachscape Work Group provided a response to the Drainage Scheme Environmental Impact Statement: <http://www.colacotway.vic.gov.au/Council-the-shire/Reports-strategies-plans/Wye-River-and-Separation-Creek-Recovery-Reports>

We commented on vegetation, erosion, water quality and system maintenance. A highlight will be the wetland area beside The Boulevard – there are frogs nearby so let's hope they migrate!

We have been very concerned about reports of dog attacks on koalas. So few koalas survived the fire - we can't afford to lose any. Please ensure that any dogs on, or visiting your property are not allowed to wander. We have asked COS to give this attention.



Protect our wildlife- dog attacks on our local koalas happen too often in our townships. Domestic animals must be under owner control at all times.

WSKRA will potentially be provided with funds to run community wellbeing and connection events for around the next 12 months. We have run many events previously – ranging from community lunches to weed identification. What sort of events would you



like next year? What helps you to stay connected with our community? Tell us at wskrasn@gmail.com

WSKRA update cont....

Planning & Building Statistics to date - Fire affected areas

In total 16 Building Permits have been issued, with occupancy certificates issued to 2 completed homes; 39 Planning Permits issued with an additional 13 currently being processed; Planning "Other" 9 Permits issued and 3 in process. 4 Planning Permit applications have been lodged in the last month. Underground cabling has been completed in Iluka Avenue.

Fire season Education

Good attendance of some 50 people at the Fire Ready briefing at Wye Surf Life Saving Club on November 4. DELWP & CFA representatives presented a fire hazard scenario and addressed practical measures to ensure personal safety and property protection in the lead-up to the fire season. Special thanks to Pete Galvin, Peter Ashton and Roy Moriarty for their expert advice and assistance.

CRC becomes WSKRA

In September the Community Resilience Committee became an incorporated association - the Wye Sep Kennett Renewal Association Inc. (WSKRA). Its purpose and functions are unchanged – to champion and guide a community led and community based approach to the renewal of our community after the 2015 fire and the following landslips. Contact us at wskrasn@gmail.com



Lorne Community Hospital update

New team member at Lorne Community Hospital

The Lorne Community Hospital would like to welcome Amy Adair to the role of Social Worker. Amy will provide support to the greater community and her services are not limited to patient access only.

Amy will be based at Lorne Community Hospital on Monday and at Otway Health in Apollo Bay on Thursday and Friday. Amy has experience working in mental health, disability, family violence, housing and homelessness, child protection, family and individual support, drug and alcohol as well as with refugees and asylum seekers.

She can also provide generalist counselling, practical support, advocacy, and referrals and can conduct risk assessments and provide therapeutic interventions. Appointments with Amy can be booked by ringing the Community Care team at Lorne Community Hospital on 5289 4316.

Health and wellbeing update

We wish to offer support and update information about obtaining health and wellbeing support. While most people are managing to make progress, for some this is still a difficult journey. We acknowledge that for many people there are ongoing problems that come with rebuilding, or even considering rebuilding.

This process is made more difficult for those who have lost holiday homes, as it means it's difficult to actually spend time in the area they love, to re-establish connections with the land, the people and the sense of belonging that is so important for us all. We acknowledge this and wish to reiterate that support is available.

People who are feeling affected by the Wye Rivers fires of 2015 and require counselling or support should first visit their General Practitioner and be referred to an appropriate counselling service. All individuals affected are entitled to up to 10 counselling sessions at no cost. If you require additional sessions, the GP will speak with the Department of Health and Human Services regarding extra sessions.

Below are the support services provided by Lorne Community Hospital:

1. Counselling services are available through the Lorne Medical Centre to any community member who can come to Lorne and surrounding areas. To access the counsellors you need an appropriate plan, which will be completed by a GP at Lorne Medical Centre at no cost to you. Contact the Lorne Medical Centre Reception on 5289 4333 to access these services.



The following Counsellors are also available in the local area and can also be accessed at no cost if you obtain a Mental Health Care Plan through any GP.

- Kay Swift (Social Worker) practicing in Geelong & Lorne M: 0407 218 313
- Tanya Harkness (Psychologist) Apollo Bay M: 0419 002 661
- Dr Barbara Hindson (Clinical Psychologist) Birregurra M: 0416 510 268

2. Other Services of Lorne Medical Centre

The Lorne Medical Centre is open Monday to Friday from 9am till 5pm and is on the lower ground floor of the Hospital – 5289 4333.

Apart from the above counselling services, the Medical Centre offers range of health and wellbeing services. Please phone 5289 4333.

Free comprehensive health checks are available for all Wye River Separation Creek and Kennett River community members at Lorne Medical Centre 5289 4333.

3. Lorne Community Hospital Services Include

24 hour Urgent Care – 5289 4300

Comprehensive Health and Wellbeing services – 5289 4300 - 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday

Remember, for all medical emergencies call 000. Lifeline Ph: 13 11 14. Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre Ph: 1800 015 188. Beyond Blue: 1300 224 636

VicRoads update

Road status

The Great Ocean Road is OPEN to all traffic. Two lanes are available along most of the tourist road from Torquay to Allansford. Temporary traffic management is in place at works areas in some locations.

The Great Ocean Road is reduced to one lane at only three locations in this area - at Separation Creek, Monash Gully just west of Wye River and at Grey River where we are constructing a new bridge.

Paddy's Path



VicRoads, DELWP and Colac Otway Shire met last week to identify works to be completed to ensure Paddy's Path is open for the Christmas/summer holiday period.

The three agencies aim to reopen the path to the Wye River and Separation Creek communities the week before Christmas through to Sunday, February 4, 2018.

Work will then resume on soil nailing a strip of the hillside from the bottom retaining wall on the Great Ocean Road to Stanway Drive, Separation Creek. We would also then aim to reopen the path at weekends, from Friday afternoons to Monday mornings.

For the safety of all, it is imperative the public remains off the path while works are in progress and construction teams and their equipment are working on the pedestrian link. VicRoads staff and contractors will minimise road works in the Wye River area between December 22 and February 4, during the peak summer holiday season to aid holiday traffic.

Replanting the Paddy's Path landslide zone is almost complete. (See image above) Crews have been planting more than 3000 native plants on the hillside.

Retaining walls

Work is progressing to schedule on retaining walls west of Stanway Drive on the ocean side of the Great Ocean Road. One 3m concrete wall is complete. The other is now 80 per cent complete. Landslide works at both locations are due for completion mid to late November.

Work began today at another landslide east of Separation Creek on the ocean side of the Great Ocean Road. This 10m wall will be complete mid December.



Erosion control

Work to stabilise up to 50 landslide sites between Jamieson River and Kennett River is nearing completion. Work also continues on six cliff faces that require rock fall netting in the Kennett River area with completion expected mid to late November.

At Big Hill, just east of Lorne, 360m of cliff face has been revegetated, anchors installed and about 60 per cent of rock fall netting has been rolled out, with completion scheduled mid to late November.

Drone monitoring

VicRoads will next week conduct aerial inspections of the Great Ocean Road with drones. Weather permitting; the flights will be conducted between Wednesday, November 15, and Friday, November 17. The flight zones are at Anglesea, Lorne, Wye River and Kennett River.

VicRoads is using drones on the Great Ocean Road to inspect any deterioration in the geotechnical landscape and to identify the impact of natural drainage flows and ground movement. Intermittent road closures, of up to 10 minutes, will be in place over short distances at up to 15 flight sites.

Grey River



Work is progressing on a new bridge at Grey River, east of Apollo Bay. Work crews have completed boring piles into the rock bed on the west side of the river. One lane of the Great Ocean Road is temporarily closed for earth works on the approaches to the new bridge. Traffic management is in place.

Apollo Bay

Work is progressing to schedule on the reconstruction of the Great Ocean Road in Apollo Bay, between the golf course at Nelson Street and the Barham River Bridge.

Kerb, channel and footpaths along both sides of the road are almost complete. About 400m of roadway is now ready for asphaltting. The job is scheduled for

completion early December. Traffic management is in place.

At Princetown, 7km of road reconstruction work is progressing on three sites on the Great Ocean Road, 15km east of Port Campbell, near Princetown. Repairs to the Skenes Creek Bridge were completed on October 18 and the walkway reopened to the public.

Great Ocean Road guardrail

Work starts on Monday on repairing sections of existing guardrail and installing lengths of new rail over various distances, totalling about one kilometre, between Kennett River and Jamieson River. There will be minor interruptions to traffic at these work sites. Work is scheduled for completion in four to six weeks.

Childers Cove

Rehabilitation of the Great Ocean Road east of the Childers Cove intersection at Narrana, 36km east of Warrnambool, is underway.

These works are part of the \$3.6 million upgrade project to address a history of run-off-road, rear-end and other crashes at the intersection of the Great Ocean Road, Childers Cove Road and Mathiesons Road, between Peterborough and Allansford.

About 1600 vehicles travel on this section of the Great Ocean Road each day. The project involves upgrading the intersection and resealing the road surface. A T-intersection will replace the current two Y-intersections. Traffic management will be in place for the duration of the project.

Colac-Lavers Hill Road

Works to construct a new 50m retaining wall on Colac-Lavers Hill Road, about 5km from Gellibrand, will begin on Monday, 13 November. During a geotechnical assessment, one traffic lane has been closed with temporary traffic lights installed to ensure the safety of all road users.

VicRoads will stabilise the site by digging out the loose material and road base. A new 50m retaining wall will then be built using steel posts and reinforced timber barriers.

Once the new retaining wall is in place, we will repair and resurface the damaged section of road and restore the speed limit to 100kmh. Construction should be completed by the end of this year.

Traffic alerts - There are no traffic alerts in place.