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New Chairpersons for CMAs

The Brumby Government has appointed new chairpersons to lead the boards of the Victorian Catchment Management Council (VCMC) and the 10 Catchment Management Authorities (CMAs).

The Chairs will commence their new roles in July 2009 and are appointed for two years.

Environment and Climate Change Minister Gavin Jennings congratulated the chairs on their appointment and commenced discussions on the future management of Victoria's natural resources at one of the most challenging times in Victoria's history.

"The Brumby Government is taking action to protect Victoria's catchments and ecology and these dedicated people will play a key role in that important work," Mr Jennings said.

"The appointments were made following a rigorous process which attracted skilled candidates who are enthusiastic and professional in their approach to natural resource management.

"The individuals appointed to these leadership roles will help to drive Victoria's response to significant environmental challenges including climate change and drought.

"The CMAs of the future will need to work with Victorian communities to respond to bushfires and increased fire risk, adapt to climate change and manage severe drought conditions."

CMAs are also responsible for consulting their local communities; raising awareness of the sustainable use, conservation and rehabilitation of land and water resources; and promoting cooperation between people and bodies involved in Victoria's overall catchment management.

New Chairperson Appointments in Gippsland:

Dr Peter Veenker, Chairperson, East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority

Dr Veenker holds qualifications in business and management and is presently self employed as a consultant. Dr Veenker is the current chair of the Audit and Finance Committee of the East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority and is newly appointed as chairperson.

Ms Liz Clay, Chairperson, West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority

Ms Clay holds qualifications in applied science, agriculture, rural development and teaching and is currently a member of the Gippsland Lakes Task Force. She has a broad range of skills in ecological systems design and analysis, organic agriculture and community engagement. Ms Clay has been the chairperson of the West Gippsland CMA since 2003 and is re-appointed as chairperson.





Victorian Agribusiness Summit

Glenn McGrath, Test legend and farmer, will be the evening speaker at the Victorian Agribusiness Summit being held at Cowes on **August 5-6**.

The summit is being organised by Agribusiness Gippsland Inc and chair Alex Arbuthnot welcomed news that the NSW-based cricketing legend had agreed to add his support to the event.

Other sponsorships are starting to roll in, including Bass Coast Shire Council and the Victorian State Government. Sponsorship packages are now on offer.

“The summit is the main event on the state’s agribusiness calendar and is expected to attract around 300 people,” Mr Arbuthnot said. “We are assembling a program including heavy-hitters as well as people of influence who you might never have heard before.”

“Service provider or banker, smallholder or seriously big player: you will be inspired, be challenged and be motivated as agribusiness leaders share their insights.”

Themes for the summit will include:

- The global financial crisis and the future of Australian agribusiness
- The short-term future for our agriculture
- Special sessions on dairy, wine, organics, horticulture and equine industries.
- Making agri-tourism work for you.

EARLY-BIRD BOOKING opens soon. Register for a program at resthaven@waterfront.net.au, fax a request to (03) 9459 9699 or post to PO Box 4026, Cowes 3922 and a program and registration form will be sent to you.

Sponsorship deals and trade stand bookings are available by contacting Sue Webster on (03) 9456 9791 or 0402 267 802.

Opportunities in Climate Change

Learn how to make the most of climate change and explore opportunities with carbon on **Tuesday, May 12 from 11am to 2.30pm** at Bimbadeen, Black Beach Road, Ventnor, Phillip Island.

Bob and Anne Davie welcome you to see how they are building carbon, reducing energy emissions and improving water use on-farm.

The day will also feature presentations from the Westernport Greenhouse Alliance Project and information on supplying Enviromeat.

Lunch is provided. RSVP by May 8 for catering purposes.

Contact Jenny O’Sullivan for more information on (03) 5663 2386 or osulliva@dcsi.net.au

Draft Strzelecki Integrated Management Plan

A draft of the Strzelecki Integrated Management Strategy is available for public comment. Submissions close Friday 15 May 2009.

Further information and feedback forms can be obtained from Shayne Haywood at the WGCMA or printed from www.wgcma.vic.gov.au.



Boost for South Gippsland Landcare Group

South Gippsland Landcare Network has received a \$4,000 State Government funding boost to support volunteers.

Eastern Region MP Johan Scheffer said the organisation had received the grant for its Group Revitalisation Project. The project aims to work with local Landcare groups to attract new members and increase NRM volunteer numbers.

It will also develop action plans to increase community involvement and produce targeted educational materials for groups to attract volunteers.

Water Creates Green Power for GWF

A micro hydro system that converts energy from water into electricity is now generating 'green' renewable power for the Gippsland Water Factory.

The system, which forms part of the Gippsland Water Factory (GWF) project, was recently commissioned and started operating at full capacity last month. It is now generating about 320 kilowatts of electricity; the amount used by about 200 homes per day.

When Gippsland Water Factory's Maryvale treatment plant is operational later this year, the electricity from the micro hydro scheme will be used to help power the site. Until then, the electricity is being sold back into the grid.

The micro hydro system was built on the inlet pipeline at Gippsland Water's Pine Gully Reservoir, located near Gippsland Water Factory (GWF) at Maryvale. Pine Gully is the storage used by Australian Paper's Maryvale mill and the reservoir where recycled water produced at GWF will be piped for industrial re-use.

About 60 megalitres (million litres) of raw water from Moondarra Reservoir currently flows into Pine Gully each day. Previously, the water simply flowed through a valve into the reservoir, but it is now diverted through the micro hydro turbine first, which utilises the power of the water to make electricity.

In total, more than 20 per cent of the electricity used at GWF's Maryvale wastewater treatment and recycling plant will be self-generated using renewable energy sources. [Full story available here...](#)

Baw Baw Shire Earns Silver Level Waste Wise Certification

Baw Baw Shire Council has moved up a level in its waste reduction efforts and on 6 April was awarded Silver Waste Wise Certification for the next two years.

The Silver Certification was presented by the Gippsland Regional Waste Management Group, with Executive Officer Andrea Klindworth congratulating the Council on the actions that had earned the certification.



Ms Klindworth added that participating in the Waste Wise program "is an important public statement of your resolve to reduce waste and become more environmentally sustainable."

[Full story available here...](#)



\$400,000 of Wastewater Upgrades Underway

Work has commenced on a \$400,000 upgrade to East Gippsland Water infrastructure at Howitt Park in Bairnsdale. This initiative is part of an ongoing program to upgrade wastewater infrastructure across the region, to improve efficiency and reliability, reduce operating costs and cut greenhouse gas emissions.

A reserve wastewater storage tank with a capacity of 215,000 litres is being installed underground in the park. This will be utilised as required during extreme wet weather events to reduce operational stress on the nearby sewer pump station, acting as a temporary store for excess wastewater and reducing the likelihood of spills.



Preparing for installation of the reserve wastewater storage tank

East Gippsland Water's Managing Director, Les Mathieson said "the Howitt Park project forms part of an ongoing program initiated by the Corporation some 18 months ago to upgrade ageing sewer pump stations across the region."

As a result of population growth and the additional wastewater flows created, the reserve wastewater storage tank has become increasingly important to help cope with extreme wet weather events. It will prove invaluable to support future development in the Bairnsdale area."

Work on the wastewater storage is due to be completed by the end of June.

Nursery Goes Greener with Recycled Water

Phillip Island's native plant nursery went a little greener last month following an agreement with Westernport Water to supply it with recycled water.

The not-for-profit Barb Martin Bushbank will receive 0.5ML of class B recycled water a year.

The two organisations completed an agreement on Wednesday March 25.

The water corporation provided pipe-work to the nursery and a Community Water Grant from the Federal Government helped cover the costs of other infrastructure.

Westernport Water staff will train the nearly-30 volunteers to use the recycled water safely.

The Bushbank collects local plant seeds for propagation and replanting. Much of the tubestock used by Landcare – including revegetating Westernport Water sites – is sourced from the Bushbank.

Phillip Island Nature Parks also support the operations of the site, which includes propagation igloos, shade-cloth and open-air nurseries.

Westernport Water's Geoff Allum said the water corporation was pleased to see potable water being replaced with recycled water. "We like to encourage potable water substitution where suitable," he said.

Bushbank president Ashley Reed said the use of recycled water was more than part of the 'gentler footprint' ethos of the group.

"It also gives us an assured and constant supply of water, which is necessary for plant propagation," he said.