

# Gippsland Natural Connection

## Newsletter of Gippsland integrated natural resources forum

Issue 3/04, March/April/May 2004

**From the Office ...** So busy that I missed March .... and now April!!! Apologies to those who regularly await the arrival of Gippsland Natural Connection.

In this edition, some events related to the Australian Innovation Festival coming up in Gippsland, and some reports on workshops and other events that have already happened.

It is Report Card time again – 15 Natural Assets of Gippsland rated from A to F for Condition and a five star rating system for stewardship. The 2004 Natural Resources Report Card will be officially launched on 4<sup>th</sup> June this year by Dr Ian McPhail, Victorian Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability.

Speaking of sustainability, the GINRF Reference Group explored a way forward with a 30 year vision for natural resource management in Gippsland, including a discussion around sustainable development last Thursday. Stay tuned for the outcomes.

Some regular reports on Project MERGe, Gippsland Research Co-ordination Group, Regional Catchment Investment Plan and Regional Catchment Strategies also included.

Carol Jeffs  
Executive Officer

### Conference Proceedings

Still some copies of the CD available for those who could not make it to the conference.

Contact Adam Miller at [Adamm@WGCMa.vic.gov.au](mailto:Adamm@WGCMa.vic.gov.au).

### DATES

#### GINRF Meeting Dates

### DATES

#### Reference Group meeting dates for 2004:

**DATES...** Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> August 2004

Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> October 2004

#### Natural Resources Report Card release:

Friday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2004

#### PAGE 2

Project MERGe

Bridging the Knowledge  
Gaps

#### PAGE 3

FAQ's about GINRF

#### PAGE 4

FAQ's about GINRF cont.

The HotSpot

#### PAGE 5

Australian Innovation  
Festival

#### PAGE 6

DSE Workshop

CMA News Flash

#### PAGE 7

MERGe Update

Free Forum

Climate Change impacts

# Gippsland Natural Connection

Issue 3/04, March/April/May 2004

## Project MERGe

Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting for Gippsland's Natural Resources.

A large part of Project MERGe is to develop a framework for the region to that co-ordinates and streamlines MER activity and provides a solid base for natural resource strategies (such as regional catchment strategies and municipal strategic statements).

### So far .....

The first regional workshop for MERGe was held on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> March. Participants were worked very hard, being asked to think back to 1988 (yes, 88, not 98!!), then project forward to the year 2020 in an attempt to understand what our businesses, decision making processes and therefore information needs might be during the next two decades. Then a series of more detailed focus group sessions with various sectors across the region were held, drilling down into what information flows will be needed by different users to operate their businesses and strategically manage our natural resources in the region. The results from both of these activities will form the basis for draft 1 of the MER Framework, due to be completed by the end of May.

### The next step .....

Draft 1 of the MER Framework and then testing of the Framework on the Gippsland Lakes

For more information, contact MERGe Project Manager, Carol Jeffs on 5175 7844, or [cjeffs@wgcm.vic.gov.au](mailto:cjeffs@wgcm.vic.gov.au)

## Bridging the Knowledge Gaps

Around 40 people converged on the WGCMA Board room on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> April for the Gippsland Lakes taskforces' "Bridging the Knowledge Gaps: Gippsland Lakes" workshop.

During this Workshop, the participants were briefed on the Gippsland Lakes and Catchments Taskforce's research priorities for 2004/2005 and were asked to use their expertise to further scope the extent and nature of research areas to address these priorities.

The areas that were covered were the Gippsland Lakes & Catchment Model, Best Management Practices for reducing nutrient export, Changing hydrodynamic conditions of the Gippsland Lakes, Community attitudes & change, Gippsland Lakes Ecological Health and wetlands.

Next steps: Expressions of interest for each of the areas above will be advertised, encouraging

# Gippsland Natural Connection

Issue 3/04, March/April/May 2004

## Frequently Asked Questions about GINRF

**Q.** *How is GINRF funded?*

**A.** GINRF had some seed funding from the (then) Department of Natural Resources and Environment and Department of Infrastructure during the 02/03 year. Operations for the 03/04 year are funded by Natural Heritage Trust. The next source of funding is currently up for discussion – possibly some type of regional funding model.

**Q.** *How long has GINRF been in operation?*

**A.** Approximately 2.5 years. The first large regional meeting of GINRF was in November 2001. (Previously known as INRM)

**Q.** *What does GINRF do?*

**A.** The purpose of GINRF is to draw together key players in a collaborative approach to natural resource management across the Gippsland region.

*The vision of GINRF is to:*

“Unify the efforts and knowledge of Gippsland’s resource managers, to ensure the cultural, economic and social activity of Gippsland is conducted in harmony with its environment.”

**Q.** *What has GINRF achieved?*

**A.** Facilitated stakeholder input to the West Gippsland Regional Catchment Strategy

Published 2003 Natural Resources Report Card

Put together a regional submission to the Victorian Government as a response to the Green Paper – “Securing our water future”

Facilitated regional partnership project – MERGe, Monitoring Evaluation and Reporting for Gippsland’s natural resources

Hosted a regional conference in February 2004

Created a comfortable, neutral and robust environment for high level discussions in the region.

**Q.** *What is the legal status of GINRF?*

**A.** GINRF is an unincorporated organisation with membership bound by a Memorandum of Understanding. Administration is hosted by West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority on behalf of the whole Gippsland region.

# Gippsland Natural Connection

Issue 3/04, March/April/May 2004

## Frequently Asked Questions about GINRF cont.

**Q.** *Who works for GINRF?*

**A.** Executive officer, Carol Jeffs has been working three days per week for the Forum, since her appointment in February 2003. Adam Miller is a business administration trainee with West Gippsland CMA, working in an Executive Assistant role two days per week for GINRF.

**Q.** *Who are the members of GINRF?*

**A.** The Forum has a membership of some sixty organisations including government departments, catchment management authorities, municipal councils, rural and urban water authorities, universities, private industry, regional development bodies, community based groups (such as Landcare), and cross agency groups (such as Gippsland Research Coordination Group).

**Q.** *What is the slogan?*

**A.** I am not actually asked this very often, but any opportunity for a plug:

“Catchment Health, Gippsland’s Wealth”

### The HotSpot

[www.grwmp.org](http://www.grwmp.org) - this site is home page only at this stage and will be progressively added to/constructed over the coming weeks. To find out more about the Gippsland Regional Water Monitoring Program, have a look at this site

[www.asirc.org.au](http://www.asirc.org.au) - The research centre was launched on 26 April 2004 by The Hon. John Brumby, Minister for State and Regional Development, Minister for Innovation. For more information on the Australian Sustainable Industry Research Centre, visit this site.

[www.ginrf.org.au](http://www.ginrf.org.au) - Find out more about the Gippsland Integrated Natural Resources Forum. General Information available, however, members area is not yet completed.

# Gippsland Natural Connection

Issue 3/04, March/April/May 2004



## Wednesday, 19 May *Making Good Business Ideas Happen:*

*Exploring local case studies and opportunities. 9:15—4:45.*

The morning session will provide on what support services are available to industry on commercialisation processes—licensing, partnering and business development—to assist them to turn innovative ideas into reality; and will showcase innovative research and provide greater access to these research and development opportunities.

The afternoon session will feature innovative practices from the client organisation's at GREEN Inc's Technology & Business Development Centre; and provide an opportunity for industry leaders to network about commercialisation challenges and to share knowledge and experience and learn from others' experiences and solutions.

Cost: Nil: Free of charge

Venue: GREEN Inc. 50 Northways Road Churchill Vic 3842

Please RSVP by Monday 17 May, 2004 by contacting Ms Roberta West on [Roberta.west@adm.monash.edu.au](mailto:Roberta.west@adm.monash.edu.au), or call 5122 6113

## Thursday, 20 May *Innovation In Regional Development: Gippsland's Success Stories. 10:30—2:45.*

Guest speakers include: Prof Al Rainnie, Director, Monash University Institute for Regional Studies, Prof Brian Mackenzie, Pro Vice Chancellor, Monash University Gippsland Campus, Wayne Casey, President, Gippsland Community Leadership Program Committee of Management, Greg Gebhart, Program Manager, Gippsland Education Leadership Program, Dr Helen Shiel, Director Centre for Rural Communities, Maree McPherson, Executive Officer GACC, Rod Smith, Executive Officer, Sustainable Gippsland Advisory Committee.

Venue: GREEN Inc, Northways Road, Churchill, Victoria

Cost: \$30 registration per person (cheques to be made payable to GACC Inc)

RSVP: Thursday 13 May 2004 5pm

To Lacey - ph: 03 5175 0600 or Email : [admin@gippslandacc.com.au](mailto:admin@gippslandacc.com.au)

(please return cheques and registration forms to GACC, PO Box 419 Traralgon VIC 3844—ABN 68 225 605 779)

# Gippsland Natural Connection

Issue 3/04, March/April/May 2004

## DSE Workshop - Challenges, Opportunities & Projects

On March 17, DSE held its Challenges, Opportunities and Projects workshop. Its purpose was to involve regional stakeholders in the identification of regional projects for DSE that will positively impact on significant challenges and opportunities for Gippsland. The workshop came up with projects under these 6 focus areas:



- Leadership in environmental sustainability
- An effective greenhouse response
- Water for the future
- Improved stewardship of public and private land
- Sustainable communities
- Service and organisational excellence

The outcome of the workshop and others was the Challenges and Opportunities document. It also helped

identify 7 projects for funding this financial year.

## CMA News Flash

The **West Gippsland Regional Catchment Strategy** is nearing final accreditation. The community engagement process for the Strategy was examined by the Victorian Independent Advisory Panel (IAP) on 28 April. On the advice of the IAP and the State-Federal Accreditation Coordinating Group (ACG), the Victorian-Australian Government Steering Committee have recommended that the Federal Ministers Truss and Kemp, and State Ministers Thwaites and Cameron, sign off on the *West Gippsland Regional Catchment Strategy*. We are anticipating a launch in late June as soon as we secure a date with the Ministers. Hope to see you there! For more information please contact Jo Caminiti on 5175 7800 or [joannec@wgcm.vic.gov.au](mailto:joannec@wgcm.vic.gov.au).

**East Gippsland draft Regional Catchment Strategy** has now been printed and is ready for exhibition between 10<sup>th</sup> May and 4<sup>th</sup> June. Contact the East Gippsland CMA office for a copy of the draft RCS and the template for written submissions. 51530462

### RHS Update

The Draft *West Gippsland River Health Strategy* is available for comment by 31 May 2004. For more information please contact Kylie Debono on 5175 7800 or [kylied@wgcm.vic.gov.au](mailto:kylied@wgcm.vic.gov.au).

# Gippsland Natural Connection

Issue 3/04, March/April/May 2004

## Australian Government NRM Website

The Australian Government has launched a new Natural Resource Management website detailing arrangements and resources for the delivery of the NAP and NHT2. The site includes Victoria and local government specific pages. Accessible at [www.nrm.gov.au](http://www.nrm.gov.au)

## Free Forum: Sustainability, culture and the 'triple bottom line' 28 May

Hosted by the Cultural Development Network and the City of Melbourne. Building an ecologically sustainable future while balancing complex economic and social imperatives is probably *the* key challenge for municipal councils in the 21st century. The place of 'cultural vitality' in the journey towards sustainability is the focus of this free forum designed for local government professionals across all disciplines from the physical to the social and cultural realms. Contact Adam Briscomb, City of Melbourne, ph. (03) 9658 8402.

## Climate Change Impacts and Adaptations

### How will it affect your business?

How will Gippsland respond to possible climate change impacts such as: changing rainfall amounts and patterns and increasing temperatures and evaporation impacting on water supply, agriculture and biodiversity; reduced snow cover impacting on tourism and biodiversity; more severe storm events resulting in flooding and erosion of land, waterways and coasts; rising sea levels impacting on coasts and estuaries, infrastructure and development?

The Victorian Greenhouse Office in DSE is preparing a strategy on climate change impacts and adaptations and will be releasing a draft for consultation in June, along with regional fact sheets developed by CSIRO. The Victorian Greenhouse Office is hosting a **workshop on 28 May** to discuss the probable impacts of climate change and what we can do to understand them and adapt to them. There is potential for a package of information on climate change impacts at a regional level to be developed as resource material for a range of organisations across Gippsland including local government, catchment management authorities, coastal board and other coastal groups, agribusiness, forestry, environment groups, public land managers, water authorities and other government agencies. **Contact: Jo Caminiti** before 26 May on 5175 7800 or [joannec@wgcma.vic.gov.au](mailto:joannec@wgcma.vic.gov.au)