



Steve Dimopoulos MP

Minister for Environment  
Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events  
Minister for Outdoor Recreation

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Ms Robert McDonald  
Clerk of the Legislative Council  
Parliament of Victoria  
[council@parliament.vic.gov.au](mailto:council@parliament.vic.gov.au)

Dear Mr McDonald

Thank you for your letter of 27 May 2025 regarding the petition tabled in the Legislative Council calling on the government to not create Wombat-Lerderderg National Park or Mount Buangor National Park.

In June 2021, the Victorian Government committed to creating various new parks, including the Wombat-Lerderderg and Mount Buangor national parks, in response to recommendations made by the Victorian Environmental Assessment Council (VEAC) in its *Central West Investigation Final Report*. VEAC consulted extensively with stakeholders and the community during its 2-year investigation before delivering its final report in June 2019. The VEAC Community Reference Group included members from Prospectors and Miners Association of Victoria, Victorian Farmers Federation, Four Wheel Drive Victoria, Bushwalking Victoria, local councils, environment groups, Traditional Owner groups and more.

380 rare or threatened species exist in these parcels of land, including some that aren't found anywhere else in the world like the Mt Cole Grevillea and Pyrenees Gum. The land also provides a home to some of our most threatened animals, like the swift parrot. These species deserve our care and attention, and we also have state, federal and international standards of conservation to uphold. This does not mean that these threatened species and Victorians cannot coexist on the land.

Victoria's national parks welcome millions of visitors each year and contribute significantly to local and regional economies. Most recreational activities will continue to be available in the new national parks, including bushwalking, camping, fishing, four-wheel driving, trail bike and mountain biking, with dog walking and horse riding permitted in areas specified by the land manager.

In developing its recommendations, VEAC was intentional about ensuring there would continue to be opportunities for all recreational activities across the region, and that the proposed changes would not impact key sites and areas of interest. For example, following consultation with peak bodies and the community, and analysis of geological data, key areas for recreational prospecting were included in recommended regional parks and retained in state forests and historic reserves. Recreational prospecting will also continue to be available across the significant areas of goldfields on public land immediately adjoining the investigation area, including in Kara Kara and Greater Bendigo National Parks, Paddys Ranges State Park, and the Castlemaine Diggings National Heritage Park.

Recreational pest hunting will be available in the various retained state forests in the Mount Cole and Pyrenees areas, and, with the proposed revocation of the Mount Cole Game Sanctuary, deer hunting would also now be allowed. Furthermore, as a variation to VEAC's recommendations, seasonal recreational deer hunting will continue to be allowed in the Pyrenees and Wombat-Lerderderg national parks, in areas where it is currently available. As with prospecting, significant areas of public land immediately adjoining the investigation areas will also continue to be available for hunting.

The Victorian Government is committed to keeping public land healthy, for all Victorians to enjoy for generations to come. I look forward to bringing this legislation into Parliament in the near future.

Thank you once again for raising this matter with me.

Yours sincerely



**Steve Dimopoulos MP**  
**Member for Oakleigh**  
**Minister for Environment**

24 / 06 / 2025