



# AIDA

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Urquhart Bluff • Aireys Inlet • Fairhaven • Moggs Creek • Eastern View



## AIDA President's Report 2019

Annual General Meeting, Saturday 27 April

I would like to acknowledge that we are meeting on the traditional lands of the Wadawurrung people and pay my respects to their elders past, present and emerging.

Welcome to our ward councillor Margot Smith. Unfortunately the CEO, Keith Baillie, was unable to attend today and is an apology. Thank you, Margot, for your attendance and support of AIDA.

Welcome to all AIDA members and others from the community.

As has become the norm over the past few years, the Painkalac Valley has remained very much the centre of our attention. At this time last year we were still hopeful that the Painkalac Project might have been successful in securing agreement for the majority of the wetlands to be vested in council with a Trust for Nature covenant over it. Unfortunately, this did not eventuate but, as you will be aware, one of AIDA's members purchased Lot 2 and is intending to rehabilitate the lot and restore its wetlands and place a Trust for Nature covenant over Lot 2. AIDA and ANGAIR are supporting this project. 'The

Painkalac Project Association' has been disbanded as its aim of bringing the three lots on the valley into public ownership is no longer possible.

The committee, like many of AIDA's members and others in the community, has been disappointed with the various changes that have happened to the valley over the past twelve months. Over the year we, like many of you, have been raising our concerns with the shire and requesting that the protections afforded by the 'Conservation Management Plan' (CMP), and other planning policies that cover the valley, be enforced.

In early December, in an attempt to resolve the various issues related to the valley, the shire decided to ask the Department of Justice Mediation Service to organise a meeting to seek to mediate the various issues. Due to difficulties with organising a date when the owners of the three lots, the lessee of Lot 3, shire officers and two AIDA representatives were all available, this session did not happen until yesterday. To ventilate the issues prior to the mediation and to clearly state

AIDA's concerns and understanding of the controls afforded by the CMP and other planning policies we sent the shire nineteen letters, one in early March about the possibility of a new bridge for the horse-riding business, and the remainder in late March. Each letter covered one particular issue in accordance with advice received from the shire. Exploring these issues and gaining a detailed understanding of all aspects of them, including all the existing controls, planning policies and zoning requirements, was an onerous and enormously time-consuming task, which Ian Godfrey took on. We are very thankful and appreciate his willingness to dedicate so much to the task. We will be making these letters, and the shire's responses, available to AIDA members to read.

The mediation session yesterday lasted all day and resulted in an agreement about some issues.

Once I have finished this report I will ask Ian Godfrey, who was at the mediation with me, to come to the microphone and we will take questions you may have about the mediation session and the outcomes.

The shire's investigation into the potential for a walking track in the Painkalac Nature Reserve to link to a revitalised area along the creek behind the Bottom Shops is complete and the project is waiting for funds to be identified before further work can be done.

AIDA held two community meetings during the year. One was to gain a better understanding about the traffic implications of the shire reopening Coalmine Road. This issue remains unresolved as the shire will consider the issue once there is clarity about the plans for the Alcoa land that is next to the road.

The other meeting – 'Will Tourism Kill the Great Ocean Road?' – in January was in response to the Great Ocean Road Action Plan which was released in late 2018. AIDA made a detailed submission to the taskforce and following the release of the action plan we established a working group to closely examine the implications of boosting tourism expenditure and investment along the Great Ocean Road, as well as identifying what we believe is needed to better support local communities to benefit from the tourist economy, to maintain appropriate environmental and landscape protections and to ensure communities such as ours continue to have a voice. We remain concerned about the potential for the Great Ocean Road, the environment and local communities to be negatively impacted by the ever-increasing number of tourists. We are not alone as we are aware of other communities along the road who have similar concerns.

Both of our meetings were well attended by AIDA members and others from the community, which demonstrates there is a desire for us to hold more community meetings and we will do so again when we see an opportunity.

The GOR Action Plan staff are planning to hold a

community meeting in Aireys soon to discuss the plan further and we will raise our concerns and requests at this meeting. The AIDA committee is working on a detailed submission setting out our views.

The work to replace the Moggs Creek bridge is starting and we are very pleased that VicRoads responded so positively to the community feedback to make extensive changes to their plans and pedestrian refuge lighting option.

During the year the committee continued to review all the planning applications for our area from Urquhart Bluff to Eastern View. At his request we met with Richard Riordan, the State Member for Polwarth, and with the CEO of GORCC as well as several times with VicRoads and with the shire and our ward councillors.

AIDA's membership remains strong. It is this strength that gives AIDA its voice and we hope all members will renew their subscriptions this year. Please encourage your friends and neighbours to join up if they agree with our aims and objectives.

Our thanks go to Nan McNab for continuing to produce our beautiful newsletters.

I would like to thank the AIDA committee for its teamwork and support over the year. Everyone has put their hand up when needed. I also want to say a special thanks to the four committee members who have not renominated for the committee this year.

Janice Carpenter has been on the committee for several years and, on AIDA'S behalf, was the very committed, diligent and welcoming president of The Painkalac Project from 2016 until it wound up this year.

Gary Johnson has been the vice-president of AIDA for many years and, until recently, had the time-consuming task of reviewing all planning applications to the shire that are in our area of interest and reporting on these at our committee meetings.

Lecki Ord has been AIDA's very able membership secretary for many years and although she is not renominating for the committee, she has agreed to continue in this capacity, for which we are very grateful.

Ian Godfrey has been on the AIDA committee for sixteen years and is a past president and treasurer. His expertise and forensic interest in planning matters will be sorely missed at our meetings but we are delighted that he has offered to be a resource whenever needed.

The Aireys and district community are very fortunate to have had the experience, expertise and enthusiasm of these four and they will all be missed and are welcome back at any time.

[Ian Godfrey and Charlotte then outlined the mediation agreement and took questions from the floor.]

*Charlotte Allen  
President*

## Painkalac Valley update

While there is not a lot to report since we emailed members about the outcome of the council's consideration of the application for landowner consent for a private bridge over the Painkalac Creek, we are aware that there is talk around town about the bridge and that some of this talk is factually incorrect. It is important to stress that the 'in principle' support provided by council on 28 May in granting landowner consent to the bridge application does not mean support for the contents of that application, only that it be allowed to proceed to formal consideration at the planning-permit stage.

We have been asked by the owner of Blazing Saddles to provide AIDA members with a copy, and comment on, their draft 'application for a planning permit'. The document which was sent to us appears to be the landowner consent application material that went to council officers earlier this year. While this may possibly be the basis for a planning-permit application when it is made at some time in the future the documentation is incomplete and we believe it is inappropriate for it to be circulated to members. However, if you would like to receive a copy, please email [c.allen@bigpond.net.au](mailto:c.allen@bigpond.net.au). The Committee will not be providing any feedback on the draft document.

The AIDA committee will prepare a detailed response to the planning-permit application when it is lodged and share that with you.

The landowner consent documents that we have received from Blazing Saddles have not allayed any of the concerns we have expressed in the past about a bridge being built over the Painkalac Creek.

The reason AIDA opposed landowner consent is the committee's understanding that the construction of a private bridge and roadway running across the creek and its riparian conservation reserves in this location, is plainly contrary to several provisions of the Surf Coast Shire Planning Scheme and also the creek's well-documented environmental systems, and that therefore allowing it to proceed to a planning-permit application would be a waste of the applicant's, the council's and the community's time.

The AIDA committee has some significant concerns about the concept, details and impacts of a private bridge over public land and we are discussing these with our lawyers. We will send you information about our concerns as soon as possible and also let you know when the planning application has been made.

We have also made a Freedom of Information request to council for access to the supporting documents that were provided by the Lot 3 lessee with the landowner consent application.

## Department of Justice mediation

Two of the agreements from the mediation session have been met:

- Council offered to remove the bottom strand of wire from its fences along the creek bordering the three valley lots. This has been done and is providing the kangaroos with a pathway through the valley that avoids them needing to push their way under the new barbed-wire fencing.
- AIDA has sent council a letter supporting the lessees of Lot 3 budget bid for funds for a drainage and environmental study of Lot 3. This was done on the understanding that there is the potential that some of the water over the lot could be used to create a new permanent wetland area on the valley floor and that the study will provide information about how the storm-water runoff from the hillside might have been affected by housing. We would also hope the study will examine the role of the valley floor as a floodplain and area of significant ephemeral wetlands.

Above all, the view of the AIDA committee is that the matter of an application for a private bridge needs to be placed within our long-term concerns for the ecological health of the river valley and the restoration of remnant wetlands foreseen in the VCAT order of 1998.

*Charlotte Allen*

## The Anglesea Eden Project

Some of you will have attended the initial community consultation about the Eden Project concept recently held in Anglesea. The idea is to transform the former Alcoa coalmine into a destination 'for immersive education and experiences which celebrate the elements that have shaped our region and tell a story of sustainability'. The proposal is being put forward as a major, world-class eco-tourism destination.

Eden and Alcoa are now collating the community feedback provided at the recent consultation events and intend to post it online. In the meantime, you can see the background and complete a survey on line at [www.edenprojectanglesea.com.au](http://www.edenprojectanglesea.com.au). As a development of this size, with the potential to increase the numbers and perhaps slow down the flow of tourists, will have a major impact on the Great Ocean Road, we urge all AIDA members and indeed all members of the local community to complete the survey.

*Ian Porter*



# Fairhaven to Skenes Creek Coastal Trail Study



## Overview

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) is assessing the value, benefits and options for a coastal walking and/or cycling trail between Fairhaven and Skenes Creek, in Victoria's Great Ocean Road region.

For more information, use of the interactive map and the opportunity to be involved in decision making go to <https://engage.vic.gov.au/trail-study>



## GOR Taskforce

Members of AIDA would be aware of AIDA's response to the Great Ocean Road Action Plan which is available on the website. The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) is presently conducting a wide-ranging community consultation on the action plan and is requesting as much community input as possible. AIDA is very pleased with the fact that DELWP is conducting such extensive consultations and with the way they are being managed.

The Great Ocean Road is one of Australia's most popular tourist destinations, attracting millions of visitors each year, supporting local communities and the economy.

This study will focus on the 60 kilometres of coastline between Fairhaven and Skenes Creek and will:

- consider potential opportunities and challenges associated with trail development
- identify a feasible route and develop concept designs
- assess social, economic and environmental benefits of a trail
- estimate construction costs.

In this light, we would encourage all AIDA members, and indeed all members of the local community, to provide comments so as to ensure that all of our views are taken into consideration in the implementation of the action plan: we need to ensure as far as possible that serious damage is not done to our community, the local environment and the sea and landscape through not controlling the numbers of tourists travelling along the Great Ocean Road. Our response paper makes a number of suggestions in this regard: [www.aires-inlet.org/aida](http://www.aires-inlet.org/aida)

From now until the end of August we encourage you to access background information and complete the questionnaires on line at: <https://engage.vic.gov.au/great-ocean-road>.

It will investigate how new sections of trail could connect with existing and already planned trails to provide a network of coastal walks from Torquay to Apollo Bay.

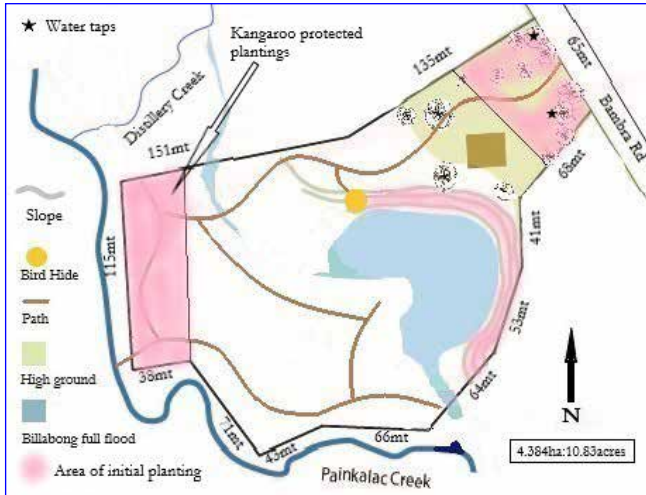
We are asking for community feedback to inform the study through two phases of community consultation in June and July 2019.



*Ian Porter*

## Progress on Lot 2

Given how hard you all worked for the Valley I thought you would appreciate a general update on the rehabilitation work on Lot 2. Many of you will know most of this but I'll put it all in for completeness. I've also attached a planning map very largely prepared by Nan.



- The laneway has now been closed to the horses from Blazing Saddles since the Tuesday after Easter and the laneway fence has been removed.
- Extensive areas of the fencing wire around the conservation area have been removed.
- The barbed wire is off from most of the fencing between Lots 1 & 2 and Lots 2 & 3.
- Jo and Adam (on Lot 3) are as keen as I am to get rid of the white plastic droppers and the barbed wire and the process has already begun.
- They are also keen to plant more indigenous plants, including manna gums, in the conservation area on their lot, especially down by the creek.
- The council has agreed to the removal of the bottom strand of wire on the boundary fence along the creek and a lot of it is already gone.
- Extensive weeding of the more invasive species has been ongoing and Rob Hanna will be spraying the kikuyu grass soon.
- Jo and Adam have agreed to the blocking of the pipe on Lot 3 draining the wetland and Adam and I blocked it off a few weeks ago.
- The council wanted a full engineering report for the proposed little clay wall on Lot 2 to block off the drainage of the wetlands; this is on hold for now while we see what happens with the water in the lake with the pipe now being blocked off.
- The bore holes we had dug in February demonstrate a clay base to the lake and a different water level to the creek. Rory Nathan, a local hydrologist, tells me this is a good thing as it implies that the lake doesn't leak.

- Another tap is being installed on the section of the block near Bamba Road for summer watering.
- Kim Neubecker is researching what is known about local Indigenous people's usage of the area prior to European settlement.

Working with Roger, Neil Tucker and Peter Forster, who have put in an amazing amount of time and effort, we also now have a plant list, scope of works for the first year (initial areas of planting are highlighted in pink on the attached map) and planned working bees to start planting. The working bees will be the third Saturday of the month; the first one was on Sunday 23 June. Thanks to the 33 people who braved a cold morning to plant almost 300 grasses, understorey plants plus a few trees. As well as planting and weeding, there will be a storage shed on the site of the house cutting, and, yes Janice and Nan, a bird hide. In addition, Roger, through ANGAIR, is preparing an application for funding from the CCMA.

All the very best and thanks so much to everyone for their help with the project.

*Mick Loughnan*

## The Painkalac wetland restoration

As you will be aware, Lot 2 in the Painkalac Valley has been purchased by AIDA members, Mick Loughnan and Jacinta Halloran, and its wetland and indigenous vegetation are to be restored. This wonderful project has the support of AIDA and ANGAIR.

ANGAIR's Roger Ganly, is coordinating the working bees to help with the restoration work as well as the long-standing working bees on the coastal reserve.

The coastal reserve working bees will continue to be on the first Saturday of the month and on Lot 2 Bamba Road on the third weekend on the month or as required.

If you would like to join the working bee group you will need to become an ANGAIR member as AIDA does not have any insurance cover for volunteers.

Details of the working bees will be included in the ANGAIR calendar published in the monthly newsletter and posted on the Aireys General Store notice board.

If you would like more information please contact Roger on 0409 502 480 or [rganly8@bigpond.com](mailto:rganly8@bigpond.com)

