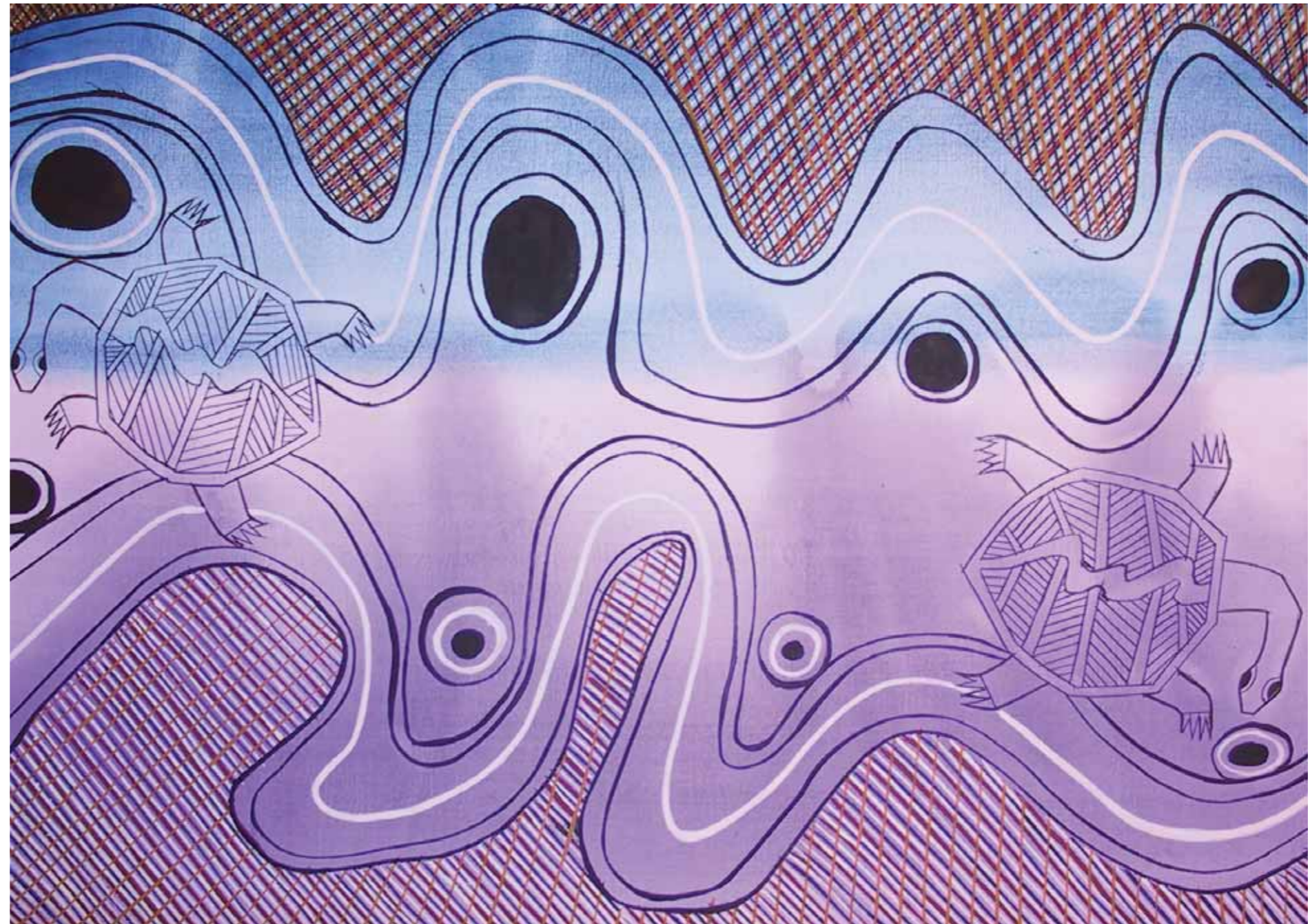


# 'Long Ago, Here Today'

Developing an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage  
Management Strategy for Victoria





Cover artwork: "River Spirit"  
by Brian Firebrace  
2004

"The famous possum skin rug of the Yorta Yorta People was the inspiration for my painting. My totem, the long neck turtle lays its eggs along the banks of the River Murray."

"River Spirit" won 1st prize in 'Long Ago, Here Today': The Victorian Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Art Competition 2004. The title 'Long Ago, Here Today' came from students at the East Gippsland TAFE, Bairnsdale.

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# Foreword



Gavin Jennings MLC  
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs

The Victorian Government acknowledges Aboriginal people as the rightful owners of their heritage, and as having primary responsibility for its control and management.

The Government is therefore committed to encouraging all parties involved in land and natural resource management activities to meet their cultural heritage responsibilities and work in partnership with Aboriginal communities.

*The Victorian Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management Strategy* will provide a framework for achieving this by establishing Victoria's first ever 'whole of government' approach to the management of Aboriginal cultural heritage.

The release of this Discussion Paper is an important step in the development of the

Strategy. It outlines the Government's objectives for the Strategy and sets out priorities identified by Victoria's Aboriginal communities for managing their cultural heritage.

I thank the Regional Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Program for undertaking the initial consultation process around the development of the Strategy.

I encourage you to consider the issues in this Discussion Paper and to actively engage in the process of developing this landmark Strategy.

GAVIN JENNINGS MLC  
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs

# Introduction

Victoria has a rich and diverse Aboriginal cultural heritage. Acknowledging and valuing this heritage is an important part of recognising the diversity of factors that define and continue to shape Victoria and its environment.

The Victorian Government is developing an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management Strategy ('the Strategy') to strengthen processes for protecting and managing Aboriginal cultural heritage.

The Government's objectives for the Strategy are to:

- recognise and promote Aboriginal community involvement in managing Aboriginal cultural heritage;
- build partnerships between Aboriginal communities, Government and other organisations and individuals whose activities may have an impact on Aboriginal cultural heritage; and
- promote consideration of Aboriginal cultural heritage as an integral part of land and resource management.

The development of the Strategy will build on previous work, and draw upon the knowledge and expertise within the Aboriginal and broader community.

The development of the Strategy is an election commitment, and meets objectives outlined in *Growing Victoria Together*. The Strategy will also have important linkages with existing Government policies and strategies.

Responsibility for the implementation of the Strategy over a five year period will be in the hands of Government agencies and others involved in land and natural resource management, in partnership with Victoria's Aboriginal communities. Some recommendations will be capable of being implemented immediately; others will require further negotiation between interested parties or access to additional resources. The Strategy will be reviewed in 2010.

You are invited to respond to the Discussion Paper and participate in the further development of the Strategy.

The paper includes a brief description of Victoria's Aboriginal cultural heritage and discusses issues relating to its protection and management. The paper also looks at key issues around cultural heritage management raised by Aboriginal communities, and discusses the steps required to develop the Strategy.

# Victoria's Unique Aboriginal Cultural Heritage



Mt William Greenstone Quarry

“The people, the sites and the land are all interconnected.”

Denise Lovett – Gunditjmarra

Victoria's rich and diverse Aboriginal cultural heritage is the legacy of tens of thousands of years of people living in the landscape.

But what is cultural heritage? A people's heritage is made up of those things they value — objects, places, artefacts and abstract concepts such as ideas, beliefs and behaviours. Some elements of this heritage are old and relate to a time when the environment was different from today. Other aspects relate to the more recent past, or have ongoing uses and associations.

Cultural heritage is important to Aboriginal people in Victoria as an expression of their relationship to the land and past. Involvement in its management plays an important part of Aboriginal community life and cultural identity.

Interest in Aboriginal cultural heritage is also important in promoting understanding and respect for Victoria's rich Aboriginal culture and complex history to the broader community.

Examples of Aboriginal cultural heritage objects and places in Victoria include rock art, stone artefacts, stone arrangements, middens, burials, trees with slabs of bark removed to make shelters or canoes, the sites of massacres and other conflicts, places of spiritual significance, missions, and places

associated with the Aboriginal rights movement in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

At Lake Condah near Heywood, Aboriginal people constructed large and complex fish and eel traps, positioning them on the undulating and stony terrain. The stone foundations of dwellings are another feature of this unique landscape.

Following the 2003 bushfires in the mountain forests of Victoria's High Country, archaeological surveys identified thousands of stone artefacts that had been used for a range of activities, such as hunting, food preparation, and wood and skin working. This evidence confirms that Aboriginal people used this area for many years before the arrival of Europeans.

At Mount William and Mount Camel, uplifted bedrock provided ideal sources of greenstone for manufacturing axe-heads. These artefacts were highly prized and traded for distances over 500 kilometres. Sandstone outcrops were often used as grind-stones for fashioning axe-heads, and other stone resources were used to make stone implements.

Limestone shelters in East Gippsland provide evidence of Aboriginal life over 30,000 years.



Celebrating restoration work at St. Johns Church, Lake Tyers Aboriginal Trust



Lockeah Sabbo inspecting rock art site, Gariwerd National Park

“The art sites of Gariwerd show the journey of my people. They are part of our search to reclaim our heritage and to control our destiny. They are the essence and spirit of our journey.”

Tim Chatfield – Tjab Whurrong  
(Foreword to ‘The People of Gariwerd’)

The extensive shelter formations in Gariwerd National Park and in the Beechworth area are renowned for their spectacular Aboriginal rock art.

Other heritage places were used and occupied by Aboriginal people in relatively recent times and have direct associations for individuals and families. Former missions and reserves, such as Framlingham and Lake Tyers, continue to be important community centres for Aboriginal people in Victoria.

Not all Aboriginal heritage places contain actual physical or material remains. Such places may include, for example, locations of past conflict between European and Aboriginal people, or spiritual places, including places where ancestral beings shaped the land.

Examples of Aboriginal cultural heritage places occur on all landforms and land tenures across Victoria — on farming land, public land, industrial areas and in urban settings.

Victoria’s Aboriginal Heritage Register contains records for over 25,000 heritage places, most of which have been discovered in the context of development projects. Only a small portion of the State (about 1%) has been formally surveyed for Aboriginal heritage places. Therefore the actual number of Aboriginal cultural heritage places in Victoria is likely to be much higher.

More information about the types of Aboriginal cultural heritage places in Victoria can be found at: <http://www.dvc.vic.gov.au/aav.htm>.

“Missionaries weren’t silly, they built the [Ebenezer] mission on a significant Aboriginal site. It’s where all the groups in the Wimmera Mallee were able to come together and live in peace and harmony in a white Christian way, not in their cultural way. On the one hand they saved us, on the other hand they destroyed our culture.”

Alan Burns - Wiradjuri, Yorta Yorta, Ulupna

# Protecting Victoria's Aboriginal Cultural Heritage



Bucks Sandhill, Barmah Forest

“A lot of the sites are older than the pyramids – people go and pay a lot of money to see them and here they just walk over them.”

Trevor (Reg) Abrahams - Gunditjmarra

The protection and management of Victoria's Aboriginal cultural heritage is vital; once lost it cannot be replaced. A photograph or written record cannot hope to replicate or capture the values with which Aboriginal people regard a rock art site, a scatter of stone tools or an important meeting place.

Aboriginal cultural heritage in Victoria is currently protected by a unique combination of Commonwealth and State legislation:

- the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984 (Cth)*; and
- the *Archaeological and Aboriginal Relics Preservation Act 1972 (Vic)*.

This legislation protects all Aboriginal cultural heritage places and objects in Victoria — those on the Aboriginal Heritage Register and those yet to be identified.

Part IIA of the Commonwealth Act applies only to Victoria and provides significant decision-making responsibilities to specified local Aboriginal communities.

The Victorian Government is proposing to develop new State Aboriginal heritage legislation, which will aim to provide more effective protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage and broaden Aboriginal community involvement in decision-making arrangements. The development of this legislation will be undertaken in parallel with the Strategy.

Despite Victorian Aboriginal cultural heritage being afforded legislative protection, many places and objects continue to be damaged or destroyed. Many natural processes, such as erosion or bush fires, may affect Aboriginal heritage values. Human activities may also be a threat, particularly where the existing land-use is changed.

Activities that have the potential to damage Aboriginal cultural heritage can include, for example:

- residential and infrastructure development;
- industries such as mining, soil extraction, forestry and agriculture;
- vegetation clearance, including removal of mature trees;
- fire management;
- erosion control, waste management and pollution control; and
- land and waterways management, such as pest plant and animal control, re-vegetation, dune stabilisation and track construction.

Consideration of Aboriginal cultural heritage needs to be built into existing and future policy and practices of Government agencies and other parties involved in land and natural resource management.

# Developing a Coordinated Approach to Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management



Ralph and Yul Harradine stabilising a burial site, Wallpolla Island

Aboriginal cultural heritage management is the responsibility of a wide range of Government agencies. For some, Aboriginal cultural heritage management is a central focus of their work, while for others heritage issues are peripheral to their day-to-day business.

A lack of shared understanding and procedures across Government means that, in some cases, Aboriginal cultural heritage is overlooked.

One aim of the Strategy is to coordinate a whole of government approach to Aboriginal cultural heritage management. This will be achieved by developing appropriate linkages between agencies, and establishing processes to integrate Aboriginal cultural heritage with land and natural resource management activities.

Aboriginal Affairs Victoria (AAV), within the Department for Victorian Communities (DVC), is primarily responsible for coordinating responses to Aboriginal issues across the Victorian Government. AAV also has responsibility for providing information, administering legislation, and developing policies and programs around Aboriginal cultural heritage.

The Victorian Government funds an Aboriginal community-based Regional Cultural Heritage Program (RCHP) which plays a key role in managing Aboriginal cultural heritage across the State. This program currently includes the following regional organisations: South West and Wimmera, North West, North East and Gippsland. These organisations are the first point of contact for anyone wanting information about Aboriginal cultural heritage.

Within the Aboriginal community, local Aboriginal organisations listed in a Schedule to the Commonwealth *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984* have specific decision-making responsibilities around Aboriginal cultural heritage. Traditional owner

groups, native title claimants, and other Aboriginal community-based organisations also play important roles in the protection and management of cultural heritage.

The Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) and the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) are the Government's lead agencies in land and natural resource management. Both play a direct and influential role in ensuring that Aboriginal cultural heritage is appropriately considered and managed.

Other agencies such as the Department of Justice, Department of Education and Training, Department of Industry Innovation and Regional Development, Department of Human Services Department of Premier & Cabinet, and other agencies within DVC, have important links with cultural heritage management through community development, education, native title and other responsibilities.

Many Government departments own and manage land and buildings where Aboriginal cultural heritage values may be present. Statutory bodies, such as Catchment Management Authorities, Water Authorities, VicRoads and Parks Victoria, also manage land that contains Aboriginal cultural heritage values.

Local government has broad powers and responsibilities for statutory land-use planning, and therefore has a significant role in protecting Aboriginal cultural heritage. In some cases, councils also have responsibility for managing land where Aboriginal cultural heritage values are present.

Other interested parties that need to be considered in developing the Strategy include industry, private landholders, industry representative bodies, heritage consultants, and educational institutions.



# Listening to Victoria's Aboriginal Communities



Gulgurn Manja Shelter, Gariwerd National Park

“All sites link us to the past. I would describe them as our journals because we didn't have any written records. They need to be preserved because it's our history and the only history we have to look back on and get information. These sites are important also for education - for everyone in Australia, part of Australian history.”

Lisa Coppe – Barapa Barapa

The Victorian Government recognises that it is important to listen to Aboriginal communities' priorities to improve the protection and management of their cultural heritage.

In 2002-03 Aboriginal communities across Victoria were consulted in order to identify how to best improve the management of Aboriginal cultural heritage. Information from previous consultation processes and ongoing discussions with the committees and staff of the RCHP, has also been considered.

The issues raised by Aboriginal communities are discussed below under three broad headings:

1. Aboriginal cultural heritage management as core business.
2. Supporting Aboriginal involvement in cultural heritage management.
3. Building knowledge and awareness of Victoria's Aboriginal cultural heritage.

These issues are interrelated and will form the basis for developing strategies to meet the Government's objectives and Aboriginal communities' priorities for the management of Aboriginal cultural heritage in Victoria.

“People lived and died in the environment and it's no different than graveyards that are around today. It's important that they are protected, looked after, not disturbed. Leave them alone! How would you feel if I dug up your grandmothers and grandfathers?”

Mick Harding – Taungurung

# 1. Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management as Core Business



Mark Dugay-Grist, (Statewide Heritage Programs, AAV) discussing post-bushfire surveys in Gippsland with Parks Victoria, the Gippsland RCHP and community representatives

What activities does your business, industry or agency carry out that may impact upon Aboriginal cultural heritage values?

How is Aboriginal cultural heritage managed on land for which you are responsible?

What opportunities are there to better protect and manage Aboriginal cultural heritage in your day-to-day activities?

Many Government agencies and other parties are involved in activities that may impact on the heritage values and interests of Aboriginal people. However, there are limited opportunities for Aboriginal people to influence how these activities are planned and carried out, and cultural heritage is often considered at the last minute rather than being an integral part of a project.

This situation can be attributed in part to a lack of resources and poor communication. A more consistent and integrated approach to Aboriginal cultural heritage management is required.

Some key priorities identified through consultation with Aboriginal communities include:

- recognising that Aboriginal cultural heritage management is an integral part of land and natural resource management and planning;

- improving protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage values through inclusion in relevant policy, programs and legislation;
- developing effective communication with Aboriginal communities around cultural heritage management issues; and
- developing Aboriginal cultural heritage guidelines for management activities and relevant industries.

In addressing these priorities, strategies will be developed to ensure Aboriginal cultural heritage is better integrated into land and natural resource management processes.

Some of the challenges in achieving improved integration include:

- establishing appropriate forums where Aboriginal communities and Government agencies, landholders and private industry can engage with each other on cultural heritage management issues;
- developing a shared understanding of the roles and responsibilities of all Government agencies, Aboriginal communities and other parties in cultural heritage management;
- establishing partnerships between land and natural resource managers and Aboriginal communities that facilitate consideration and management of cultural heritage; and
- allocating resources to meet Aboriginal cultural heritage management responsibilities.



Peter Lovett, South West and Wimmera RCHP describing the features of a scarred tree to farmers at a cultural heritage workshop

## Wimmera Indigenous Resource Management Partnership

“Mutual respect and understanding are critical if agencies and Indigenous communities are to work together to protect cultural heritage.”  
Lyn McLachlan, Native Title Coordinator, Department of Sustainability and Environment

“To address this, the Department of Sustainability and Environment has formed a partnership approach with Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Co-operative [Horsham] and the Wotjobaluk Traditional Land Council and a number of public sector organisations including the Department of Primary Industries, Wimmera Mallee Water, Wimmera Catchment Management Authority, VicRoads, Parks Victoria and Horsham Rural City Council”, says Lyn McLachlan.

“Our group meets bi-monthly to discuss cultural heritage and native title issues in the Wimmera region”.

“One outcome has been a cultural learning exchange program that helps land managers meet their legislative and moral obligations. It has also led to higher levels of Indigenous involvement in land management decisions and increased employment opportunities for Indigenous people delivering the cultural training parts of the program”.

“The partnership approach of the group is also demonstrated by its support to the Wotjobaluk Traditional Land Council and the Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Co-operative in the management of important cultural heritage places in the region”.

## Promoting Aboriginal Cultural Heritage to the Farming Community

“I hope that in future, the concept of natural resource management will automatically mean the inclusion of cultural heritage.”

Louise Thomas, Ararat Hills Project Officer, Department of Primary Industries

Over the last 18 months the Department of Primary Industries has been working in partnership with the South West and Wimmera RCHP to promote knowledge of Aboriginal cultural heritage within the local community in the Ararat district. This has included a series of cultural heritage workshops all of which have included a visit to a local farm to inspect an Aboriginal cultural heritage place. In addition, the Ararat Hills Project Officer regularly includes information about various aspects of the region’s local Aboriginal heritage in the Upper Hopkins Landcare Newsletter and local newspapers.

“I’m hoping that by increasing the farmers’ awareness of Aboriginal cultural heritage places

on private land, that they will begin to appreciate what these places mean to the Aboriginal community. If they lose their fear of having them on their own place, they will develop a respect for, and interest in, preserving them”, says Louise Thomas, the Ararat Hills Project Officer.

“It’s a natural progression for agency staff to broach these issues in our whole farm planning sessions (both group work and one-to-one whole farm plans), and they can be presented in non-threatening ways. I believe agency staff who work closely with farmers are uniquely placed to discuss these issues with farmers under the guidance of the RCHP and Aboriginal communities”.

## 2. Supporting Aboriginal Involvement in Cultural Heritage Management



Monitoring trench excavation at Ngamadjidj Shelter car park, Gariwerd National Park

How can your workplace support Aboriginal people in the management of their cultural heritage?

What opportunities are there for the establishment of working partnerships with Aboriginal people around cultural heritage?

Aboriginal people throughout Victoria have emphasised the importance of developing appropriate skills to increase their involvement in cultural heritage management.

A number of exemplary training programs have been developed between local Aboriginal communities, the education sector and Government agencies. Some initiatives have resulted in employment and creation of business opportunities.

Other priorities identified by Aboriginal communities include:

- building stronger Aboriginal involvement through improving legislative and administrative processes;
- providing career paths and accredited training programs for Aboriginal people around cultural heritage management; and
- supporting Aboriginal communities to manage and improve appreciation of cultural heritage, including opportunities to pursue cultural tourism enterprises.

Strategies to address these priorities will be developed to increase access by Victoria's Aboriginal communities to education, training and employment opportunities associated with cultural heritage management.

The priorities identified here present a number of challenges for Government agencies, Aboriginal communities, and the RCHP. These include:

- responding to the needs and interests of the different groups within the Aboriginal communities including traditional owners, women, youth and Elders;
- providing on-going support for Aboriginal community-based organisations managing cultural heritage;
- developing culturally appropriate, meaningful and accessible training programs in cultural heritage management;
- formally recognising the value of Aboriginal cultural knowledge;
- creating flexible career paths in Aboriginal cultural heritage management that offer a range of employment options in community-based and Government roles; and
- encouraging a business orientated approach to Aboriginal cultural heritage management.





Budj-Bim Tours and Hospitality Company  
at Lake Condah Mission

## Winda Mara Aboriginal Corporation's Community Jobs Program

“One of the biggest challenges for us is to create employment opportunities for our young people. We want to be able to create jobs in our local area for our community members”.

Denise Lovett, Winda Mara  
Aboriginal Corporation, Heywood.

In February 2001, Winda Mara Aboriginal Corporation together with Aboriginal Affairs Victoria ran a field school at Cape Bridgewater as a component of a TAFE course on Aboriginal cultural heritage management for Aboriginal community members and RCHP officers.

Some of the field participants were given the opportunity to participate in a Community Jobs Program that was linked with further TAFE training in tourism and hospitality. These courses taught participants key skills required to operate their own tourism and hospitality enterprise.

As a consequence of this training, the Gunditjmarra people established the Budj-Bim Tour and Hospitality Company, based

at Heywood. Budj-Bim is the Gunditjmarra name for Mt Eccles, an extinct volcano located near Lake Condah in south west Victoria.

This project demonstrates one way in which the investigation of Aboriginal cultural heritage values for management purposes can be linked with local initiatives and programs, to provide on-going benefits for Aboriginal people.

For information regarding tours and other services, contact:

Budj Bim Tours and Hospitality Co.  
PO Box 215  
Heywood VIC 3304  
Phone / fax: (03) 5527 1699  
Mobile: 0419 271 634

### 3. Building Knowledge and Awareness of Victoria's Aboriginal Cultural Heritage



Uncle Albert Mullett teaching students about Aboriginal cultural heritage at grinding grooves, East Gippsland

What is the best way to promote understanding of Aboriginal cultural heritage in your work area?

What do your clients want and need to know about Aboriginal cultural heritage?

Aboriginal communities have indicated, and Government has acknowledged, that more effort is needed to promote knowledge of the State's unique Aboriginal cultural heritage. The more information the broader Victorian community is exposed to, the more likely Aboriginal cultural heritage places and objects will be protected, celebrated and valued both now and by future generations.

Key issues identified by Aboriginal communities for furthering knowledge and awareness of Aboriginal cultural heritage, relevant legislation and management issues, include:

- supporting Aboriginal community initiatives to develop appropriate educational, interpretive and information materials for a variety of audiences;
- ensuring information about Aboriginal cultural heritage management is built into relevant Government and business information and awareness materials; and
- developing accessible publications (both print and non-print) that provide accurate and specific information on cultural heritage management and protection,

and promote an appreciation of Aboriginal cultural heritage.

There are many ways that Government agencies, Aboriginal communities and others can work together to encourage a society that values and celebrates its Aboriginal heritage.

A range of approaches is required to promote knowledge and awareness of Aboriginal cultural heritage at state, regional and local levels.

Some of the challenges for furthering knowledge and awareness of Aboriginal cultural heritage include:

- exploring ways to build recognition of Aboriginal cultural heritage into broader community life (for example, local councils flying the Koori flag, promoting the use of Aboriginal place names, and conducting "welcome to country" ceremonies at community events);
- developing opportunities for Aboriginal communities to promote cultural heritage through the education sector and sustainable cultural tourism enterprises;
- building relationships between Government agencies, museums, private landowners, educators and Aboriginal communities, and developing joint projects based around Aboriginal cultural heritage; and
- encouraging 'good news' stories and using a wide range of media to disseminate information about the importance of Aboriginal heritage to a wide audience.



Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative's Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management Induction Video

## Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative's Cultural Heritage Management Induction Video

"We do a lot of monitoring of building and development works in the Geelong area, but many contractors and developers aren't really aware of Aboriginal cultural heritage protection legislation", says Trevor (Reg) Abrahams, Cultural Heritage Officer for the South West and Wimmera RCHP.

Reg explains that, "When Aboriginal community representatives are required to monitor impacts of development work on cultural heritage places, they have to go through a work site induction program so that they are aware of health and safety issues and other important information about the work site and operations."

"We thought it would be a good idea if we made an Aboriginal cultural heritage induction video for contractors and machinery operators. We wanted to get the attention of the machine driver, the people who are out working on site".

The 12 minute video provides an introduction to Aboriginal cultural heritage, providing examples of the types of heritage places that are commonly found in the

Geelong area, such as shell middens, scarred trees and stone artefact scatters.

The video describes land that may be of contemporary interest for housing development may have been the location of an Aboriginal campsite hundreds of years ago. Earth disturbing works associated with the housing development, and similar land management activities, might disturb or expose Aboriginal heritage values.

"The video provides advice on legislation protecting Aboriginal cultural heritage in Victoria and encourages anyone who may be carrying out ground disturbing works in the Geelong area to contact the Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative for cultural heritage advice", says Reg.

For copies of the video, contact:

Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative  
PO Box 402  
North Geelong VIC 3215  
Phone: (03) 5277 0044

"The video has been really popular. It's a good way to get our message across and promote the role of inspectors and site monitors in protecting Aboriginal cultural heritage."

Trevor (Reg) Abrahams, South West and Wimmera RCHP



Kenneth Stewart, North West RCHP

## Raising Awareness of Cultural Heritage in North West Victoria

“Raising awareness about Aboriginal cultural heritage issues is very important. We are always being asked to come and talk to various groups about our culture and history. We also need to promote the role of Aboriginal cultural heritage organisations and staff.”

Kenneth Stewart, Regional Director, North West RCHP

A couple of years ago, in response to increasing demands for information about Aboriginal cultural heritage issues, the North West RCHP sought assistance from Museum Victoria for the production of an educational display. The North West RCHP wanted to create a display that could be easily transported and set up as needed.

Staff of North West RCHP are involved in a wide range of promotion and education activities and the display has been a great tool for promoting knowledge of Aboriginal cultural heritage issues. Kenneth explains, “We take the display with us when we deliver cross-cultural awareness sessions. We can set it up at field days and other local community events. It’s a good starting point for conversation, introducing the non-Indigenous community to the work carried out by the North West RCHP”.

“Our role is to monitor all works that could impact on Aboriginal sites in our region, assess the site management needs and identify previously unrecorded sites. We work with a wide range of stakeholders and, using the display, we can promote our organisation and Aboriginal cultural heritage to the broader community”, says Kenneth.

The North West RCHP is currently in the process of producing further displays for use by its Cultural Heritage Officers. “We want to show the diversity of Aboriginal culture in Victoria, different sites occur in different areas. We want to put in contact details so if people want to ask more questions or think they have an Aboriginal site on their land they know how to contact us”, explains Kenneth.



# Next Steps



Wurundjeri dancers performing at Bullum-Bullum Aboriginal Place, Melbourne

The Victorian Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Strategy will draw upon the knowledge and expertise of a wide range of individuals and organisations with responsibility for managing Victoria's Aboriginal cultural heritage.

Developing the Strategy will involve:

- interviewing a cross-section of organisations and interests to identify issues and opportunities that could be addressed through the Strategy;
- hosting forums where agencies, Aboriginal community and other stakeholders can participate in shaping the Strategy, and identify initiatives and possibilities within their own areas of responsibility;
- establishing a working group of Government agencies to develop a whole of government approach to the Strategy;
- establishing a RCHP reference group to provide continued engagement around

Aboriginal community priorities and test ideas as initiatives for the Strategy are developed; and

- hosting regional Aboriginal community forums to provide updates on the development of the Strategy, discuss issues, and test ideas.

Aboriginal Affairs Victoria has primary responsibility for developing the Strategy. It is envisaged that a draft Strategy will be presented for community review in early 2005.

You are invited to contribute to the development of the Strategy. Send your ideas, comments and questions to:

The Heritage Policy Team  
Aboriginal Affairs Victoria  
Department for Victorian Communities  
GPO 2392V  
Melbourne Victoria 3001  
Free call: 1800 762 003  
Facsimile: (03) 9208 3292  
Email: [aboriginal.heritage@dvc.vic.gov.au](mailto:aboriginal.heritage@dvc.vic.gov.au)