

Environment Victoria News

MOBILISING PEOPLE TO SAFEGUARD OUR ENVIRONMENT

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YEARS

OF PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT





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Contributing writers

Jono La Nauze, Cat Nadel, Nick Aberle, Juliet Le Feuvre, Jane Stabb, Greg Foyster, Alex Merory, Cameron Wheatley, Laura Melville, Rai Miralles, Peter Barret

Editors Greg Foyster & Alex Merory

(03) 9341 8125

editor@environmentvictoria.org.au

Subeditor Jenny Lee

Membership enquiries (03) 9341 8100

admin@environmentvictoria.org.au

Media enquiries (03) 9341 8127

j.lanauze@environmentvictoria.org.au

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For more information, visit

www.environmentvictoria.org.au

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Authorised by J. La Nauze, CEO, Environment Victoria, 60 Leicester Street, Carlton, VIC 3053.

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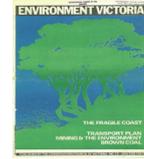
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Editorial

Jono La Nauze, Chief Executive Officer

Environment Victoria is 50 years old, and still growing strong

ARE WE THERE YET? WE'VE BEEN

on this road for almost 50 years. We've helped bring about remarkable changes, warded off grave threats. But we're not there yet.

Environment Victoria has saved Westernport from industrial development at least three times. Now we have a year to do it again. We've held back plans to boost Victoria's coal pollution for decades, and now it's finally being cut.

They were heady times when representatives of 76 conservation groups met in Richmond on 30 October 1969 to form the organisation called Conservation Council of Victoria (later renamed Environment Victoria). Their

campaign to protect the Little Desert changed the face of environmental politics in this state.

They are heady times today too. On the highway to the Little Desert, Djab Wurrung people are defending a sacred birthing site more than 50 generations old. Around the world Extinction Rebellion protesters are challenging governments to act on the climate emergency we are facing. And on 20 September we will join a global climate strike led by school students in over 2000 cities and backed by some of the world's biggest trade unions and faith groups.

Meanwhile, Australia's Emissions Reduction Minister Angus Taylor only wants to talk about Victoria's climate

policy – because he thinks it's too ambitious. The facts tell a different story. The Andrews government's target of 50% renewable electricity by 2030 is a goal that will be surpassed in 2029 without the government lifting a finger to help. It's also considering emissions reduction targets that would fail to limit global warming to 2 degrees, let alone 1.5.

We aren't yet a society living in harmony with a healthy environment, and while Victoria might have some of the best climate policies in Australia, we're still not moving fast enough. But after fifty years, the Environment Victoria community is fighting fit and we are up to the challenge.

AGL's dirty gas plan delayed again – time to stop it for good!

We've been working with local community group Save Westernport to stop AGL from building a gas import terminal in Westernport Bay. Climate and energy analyst Rai Miralles highlights wins so far, and how to stop this destructive project for good.



Rai Miralles
Climate & Energy Analyst

IN THE MIDST OF A CLIMATE CRISIS, and despite community opposition, AGL is planning to build a polluting and unnecessary gas import terminal in beautiful Westernport Bay.

Westernport Bay hosts Ramsar wetlands of international importance and is a UN Biosphere Reserve. Yet this is the place AGL – Australia's biggest climate polluter – chose for a giant gas import terminal.

AGL's plan does not add up. Australia has so much gas it recently became the world's largest LNG exporter. Imported gas would increase our climate pollution at a time when we urgently need to move away from fossil fuels, and the local community is alarmed about the destructive impacts a terminal would bring.

We have ramped up the pressure on AGL

Together with local groups, we are pushing back. Earlier this year we discovered that AGL was trying to weaken laws that would forbid them from dumping up to 45 million litres of chlorinated wastewater each day into the Bay's internationally significant wetlands. We exposed this with a May 2019 news story in the *Guardian*.

In the lead-up to this year's federal election, we worked with Save Westernport to organise a candidates' forum at Balnarring Community Hall. More than 450 locals packed the hall to hear all major candidates, including local member Greg Hunt MP, commit to stopping AGL's plans.

In June, joined by a busload of locals, we showed up at Australia Energy Week and delivered a petition with more than 17,000 signatures to AGL's CEO, Brett Redman. The same day, with no apparent irony, he spoke to the conference on "Helping Communities Through the Energy Transition".

The fight continues

At the end of June, AGL announced a second delay based on 'operational requirements' arising from the Environment Effects Statement (EES) process. AGL had tried to avoid this



We exposed AGL's attempt to weaken laws with this story in *The Guardian*.

process, but we campaigned for planning Minister Richard Wynne MP to require a full EES. AGL now expect to make a final decision by mid-2020.

But delaying this plan is not enough. It's time to stop it for good. The next year is key in the fight for Westernport Bay. We need to ramp up pressure and hold AGL accountable for the damage their gas terminal would cause to this precious ecosystem.

This is how we'll stop them

We will continue to work with the community, including groups like Save Westernport, while increasing pressure on AGL by developing awareness among consumers and shareholders.

At the same time, we will show the state government the costs of allowing this unpopular and destructive gas import terminal to go ahead rather than speeding up the transition away from dependence on this polluting, expensive fossil fuel.

How you can help:

1. Hit AGL where it hurts by sending them customer feedback or reviewing their business online. Learn how at envict.org/agl-review
2. If you're a local, connect with Save Westernport at savewesternport.org
3. Donate to the campaign at envict.org/stop-agl-donate



At Westernport (l. to r.): Richard Hawkins, author, Anne Porter, Balnarring Foreshore Committee, Kate Brent, VNPA, Marie Tehan, Environment Minister, Dr Brian Cunyng, WPPC, Graham Berger, Surfriders, Linda Parlane, EV, Karri Giles, FOE.

Victory in Westernport

WITH LINDA PARLANE their faces by announcing the

HISTORIC WESTERN PORT WINS

Over the decades, Environment Victoria has worked with local community groups to protect Westernport from a proposed nuclear power station on French Island, an aluminium smelter at Crib Point, and Shell-Mobil's plan to import oil (see pictured article). Three times they've tried, and three times we've won. Let's make this the fourth victory!

SEE OUR 50 YEARS HISTORY SECTION, STARTING PAGE 7

Getting the Basin Plan back on track



Juliet Le Feuvre, Healthy Rivers Campaigner



A satellite image of the Menindee lakes on January 4 2019, just before the mass fish kills.

The Murray-Darling Basin Plan has been compromised by big irrigators — but there is a way to get it back on track

IN JUNE I TRAVELLED TO CANBERRA to deliver a load of dead fish. The fish were made of paper, each signed by a Victorian concerned about mismanagement of the Murray-Darling Basin. Altogether, 4613 people added their voices. We handed the fish to Water Minister David Littleproud's office, and then we met as the Lifeblood Alliance, friends and allies from across the basin, to work out how to restore our precious rivers to health.

Together we developed a strategy to restore integrity in the Murray-Darling Basin Plan, rescue our rivers and support communities that depend on them. This will guide our river campaigning for the next few years.

1. Protect river flows

Right now, water meant for the environment is being redirected to other uses, including for private purposes during drought. We need to prevent this. We also need to resume the cost-effective practice of buying back water from farmers willing to sell it.

2. Establish good governance

We can remedy the lack of independent oversight by restoring the National Water Commission and establishing an independent Federal Basin Plan

Regulator. We also need rigorous independent assessment of all water recovery projects.

3. Build resilient communities

As our climate gets hotter, towns and industries in the Murray-Darling Basin will need to adjust. Basin communities need help to diversify beyond water-intensive industries. We also need more diverse community representation in decision-making, including of First Nations people.

4. Secure cultural water for First Nations

First Nations people have a unique connection to the waterways of the Murray-Darling Basin, which are literally their lifeblood. There's an urgent need to establish Strategic Indigenous Reserves and cultural water flows.

5. Align water extraction with the science

Sustainable Diversion Limits (SDLs) govern how much water, on average, can be used in the Basin by towns, communities, industry and farmers. These SDLs should be set at environmentally sustainable levels, with provision for climate change. Protection of low flows during drought is also essential to long-term river health.

PROBLEMS WITH IRRIGATION SUBSIDIES

Under the Murray Darling Basin Plan, irrigators are subsidised to upgrade to more efficient equipment. This is intended to save water, but there are problems. First, subsidising irrigation upgrades costs twice as much as simply buying back the water. Second, the savings may be overestimated. Third, in response farmers are planting more permanent crops that require the same amount of water every year, wet or dry. Finally, corporate irrigators on the Murrumbidgee are using government funding to build new private dams and expand irrigation. A water lawyer described this use of taxpayer dollars as "so perverse, it's almost worse than water theft".

6. Track Basin Plan progress

We don't know the answers to basic questions. Who has been paid what irrigation subsidies? How much water has been returned to rivers? Has it had an environmental benefit? We need a full independent audit of environmental water recovery to date, including water availability for environmental flows.

7. Improve transparency in the Basin Plan

Water Minister Littleproud has said his number one priority is to restore integrity in the Basin Plan, but at present the system lacks transparency. We could improve this through mandatory metering and real-time monitoring of water use, including satellite tracking. We could also establish a free, publicly accessible register of water ownership.

Sign our petition to stop the river rorts and get the Basin Plan back on track. Visit envict.org/basin-plan

River reflections – 12 years of campaigning

Healthy rivers campaigner Juliet Le Feuvre is retiring this year. She reflects on some key moments and achievements during her 12 years with Environment Victoria.



“IN A PROTRACTED DROUGHT AND with the prospect of long-term climate change, we need radical and permanent change.” John Howard made this bold statement on Australia Day 2007, announcing a \$10 billion national plan to address “once and for all” the over-allocation of water in the Murray-Darling. It could be a mission statement for Environment Victoria’s Healthy Rivers campaign.

I fell in love with the Murray some years before, on our first ever family camping trip to Lake Hattah. We had a set of sticks on the lake shore in front of our tent showing the water level it rose from day to day. Something clicked and I started on the journey that eventually led me to Environment Victoria and the rivers campaign in 2006.

It was an exciting time. We were working on the first Victorian water strategy to start planning for a future with less water. The Minister announced that water conservation would be the heart of the strategy; an extra 66 billion litres would be set aside for the central region’s rivers, including the Yarra, the Barwon and the Moorabool.

It wasn’t all smooth sailing. Deep into the Millennium drought, with Melbourne’s water reserves plummeting, in 2007 Premier Steve Bracks announced a massive desalination plant and a north-south pipeline to shore up Melbourne’s water supply. It took us another four years of hard work, including a 100-vessel ‘Flow-tilla’ event, to get the promised water for the Yarra.

The drought also had a devastating



Above: The Yarra River ‘flow-tilla’ in 2006, featuring 100 boats, helped secure more water for our rivers.

impact on the Murray-Darling. Rivers were drying up and wetlands turning acidic as batteries. John Howard’s intervention in 2007 created a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to halt the degradation of our precious rivers, signalling the start of our Save the Murray campaign.

Twelve years later, we’ve used just about every tactic in the book. We’ve held a funeral for the Murray (with a giant Murray cod in a coffin), taken ministers on canoe trips and bus tours, and presented at a royal commission. Not to mention the petitions, submissions, committees, inquiries, discussions with bureaucrats and phone-calls with radio stations that are the bread and butter of a campaigner’s life.

And we have made enormous progress – the Murray-Darling Basin Plan is far from perfect, but it’s still a national plan with bipartisan support and \$13 billion funding attached. I’m hopeful we can make it work and restore our rivers to health.

For me the biggest moment came in 2012 when Julia Gillard agreed to add 450 billion litres to the water recovery target in the Plan, changing something that really wasn’t up to the job to a plan with the potential for the ‘radical and permanent change’ that John Howard – and we – had envisaged.

More important than any other achievement is the almost 2000 billion litres of water now held by the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder to protect and restore the rivers and wetlands of the Murray-Darling. This precious water has been used to promote fish breeding in the Goulburn, fill the lakes at Hattah Kulkyne, and flood sections of the forest at Barmah, Gunbower and other treasured sites up and down the river. It is literally life-giving and beyond our wildest dreams in the early 2000s. While there’s a long way to go, that’s 2000 billion litres of water for the environment that we didn’t have at the start of the process.

None of this would have happened without the work we’ve put in, along with our partner groups and river champions in Victoria and interstate, plus all of you who have supported us every inch of the way.

My most treasured moments from the last 12 years of campaigning are all to do with people who love and care for our precious rivers. I am always amazed by the insights, efforts, commitment and passion you bring. We share a beautiful vision – a river with all the water it needs – and I look forward to passing that on to our next campaigner here at Environment Victoria.

Solutions to our recycling crisis

The current recycling crisis is an opportunity we can't afford to waste.



Cameron Wheatley,
Communications Coordinator



AUSTRALIA'S APPROACH TO

recycling has been to make it someone else's problem by shipping it offshore. Until recently, up to a third of Australia's recycling was shipped to China alone. The exported material was poorly sorted and often contaminated.

Then, at the start of 2018, China set higher standards for the waste it was willing to receive. Other Asian countries are following China's path. India has banned all solid plastic waste imports and Malaysia is also introducing restrictions.

The change threw many recycling businesses into chaos. SKM, the company responsible for more than half of Victoria's recycling, resorted to stockpiling waste until a stockpile caught fire, blanketing the surrounding suburbs in toxic smoke.

SKM's business collapsed, and many thousands of tonnes of recycling was sent to landfill.

It's clear that the days of exporting our waste problems are over, and our system can't deal with the huge amount of waste we create.

But there is a solution hiding in plain sight. The Victorian government is sitting on a \$400 million sustainability fund collected from landfill levies designed to solve problems exactly like this.

For years the unspent funds have been used to prop up the state budget's bottom line. But the stakes are mounting along with the piles of waste in landfill, and now is the time for big investments.

The immediate response from the government has been a 'rescue package' of \$37 million over three years, and a potential overhaul of the kerbside collection system.

It's a good first step, but it has been criticised as inadequate by local councils, and our waste problems go far beyond the collapse of SKM.

Instead of trying to manage ever-growing mountains of waste, we need to produce less waste to begin with!

A more promising development is the government's announcement that it will implement a 'Circular Economy' policy and action plan by 2020.

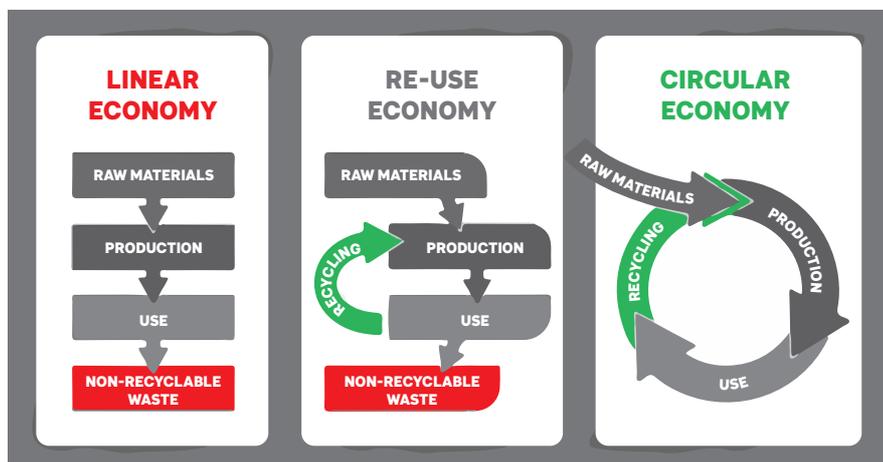
A 'circular economy' means reducing wasteful consumption and creating incentives, a conducive legal system, and institutional frameworks so that almost nothing is thrown 'away' ... because there is no such thing. 'Away' is just another part of our precious planet.

These changes will have huge environmental benefits and stimulate new industries. There are plenty of international examples such as the European Union's 'Circular Economy Plastics Strategy' and China's 'eco-industrial parks', where related businesses are located near each other so waste from one facility becomes another's feedstock.

We'll be expecting much more than talk from the Andrews government, and we'll be holding them accountable. Because what really belongs in the trash is the idea that we can keep up our current system of waste and exploitation.

7 KEY STEPS TOWARD A CIRCULAR ECONOMY

1. Facilitate the creation of Circular Economy Precincts.
2. Use the government's purchasing power to create more markets for environmentally friendly goods.
3. Create a system for food waste collection for commercial and household food waste.
4. Provide grants, tax incentives and subsidised consultancy advice for small businesses.
5. Offer incentives for companies to design and manufacture products that last longer and are easier to repair, reuse and recycle.
6. Impose disincentives for producing things that cannot be reused or recycled.
7. Support the sharing economy and remove legislative barriers.



PEOPLE FOR THE PLANET: 50 years of Environment Victoria

Imagine a nuclear power station on French Island in Westernport Bay, or 23 coal power stations polluting the Latrobe Valley. Picture the Grampians logged and smouldering, and the Snowy River completely dried up. These were all real threats over the last 50 years that were stopped by collective action. And while there's always more to do, we should celebrate what Environment Victoria has achieved, because it can inform and inspire campaigns to come.

This is the thinking behind a

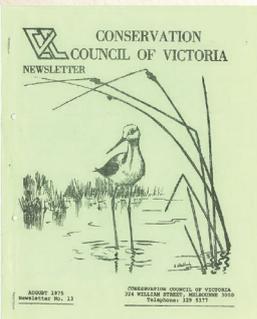
project that documents our history in a short film and book (to be released in October). Some of the stories will come as a surprise. Did you know Environment Victoria was infiltrated by logging industry spies in the 1990s? Others show remarkable foresight – Environment Victoria has been arguing for a transition to sustainable industries in the Latrobe Valley since 1986.

With the benefit of hindsight, patterns emerge. For example, since the 1970s the wetlands of Westernport have been threatened by proposals for a power station,

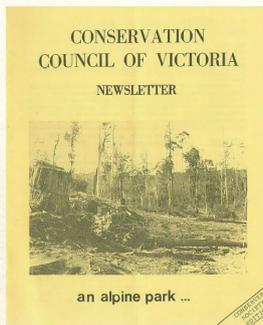
an oil terminal and now AGL's gas import terminal. Each time we've worked with community groups to fend them off.

Over the decades, Environment Victoria has weathered hostile governments and powerful corporate opponents. The environment is central to this story, but so are the people who have worked to protect and preserve it. That's why we decided to call the book *People for the Planet* and focus on their personal stories. We hope you enjoy reading some of them in the following pages.

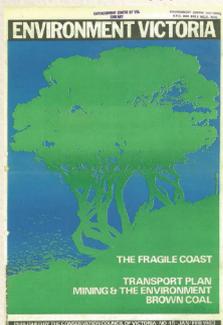
Below: Environment Victoria News front covers over the years.



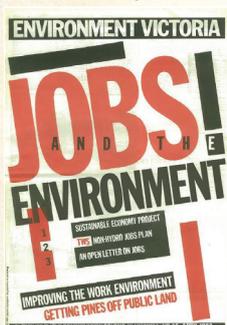
AUGUST 1975



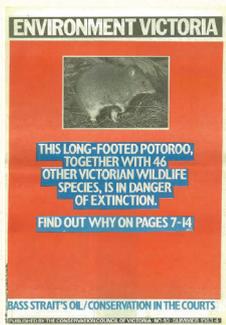
MAY 1980



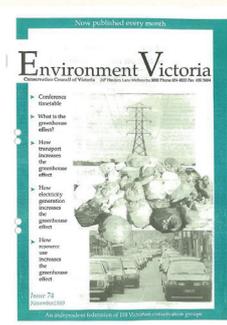
JANUARY 1983



APRIL 1983



SUMMER 1983/84



NOVEMBER 1989



JANUARY 1996



DECEMBER 2001



SEPTEMBER 2003



SUMMER 2007

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the book!

People for the Planet: the Story of Environment Victoria will be published October and available in local libraries. Join us for the 50th Celebration in October.

RSVP: envict.org/50years

We'd like to acknowledge the support of the Victorian government's Local History Grant.

Finally, we'd like to thank journalist Peter Barrett for researching and writing the book.

50 years of Environment Victoria

A T I M E L I N E

Campaigning for national parks, returning water to rivers, pioneering sustainability programs, promoting healthier transport and working to solve the climate crisis – over 50 years we've done a lot! Here's a timeline of key achievements.

1969

Inspired by the fight to save the Little Desert, representatives of 76 diverse conservation groups create a new organisation as a united voice for Victoria's environment. The Conservation Council of Victoria (CCV) is born.

1978

Seeds for Change: Creatively Confronting the Energy Crisis, an ambitious examination of energy policy and sustainable urban living, is published.

1984

The Grampians National Park opens, following a concerted campaign by the CCV and partners.

1988

The Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act, a world-leading piece of legislation designed to protect the natural world advocated and shaped by the CCV, is passed through Parliament.

1989

The Alpine National Park – Victoria's largest national park – is created after a nearly two-decade campaign by the CCV, VNPA and others.

1994

The organisation's name is changed to Environment Victoria to raise its public profile and reflect a broader range of campaigns.

1996

Environment Victoria leads other state-based conservation groups to create Smogbusters, the first national community campaign to achieve clean air through sustainable transport.

1997

Shell-Mobil abandons plans to import oil in large tankers through Crib Point in Westernport Bay after a persistent campaign from Environment Victoria and local groups.

2000

Water flows return to the Snowy River after a community campaign from Environment Victoria and local activists in East Gippsland (previously, more than 99 percent of the river's headwaters were diverted inland for irrigation).

2002

Environment Victoria begins household educational programs on energy use and waste, and later launches the first multicultural sustainability programs in Victoria.

2004

Helped secure 169 billion litres of environmental flows to the Murray River, founded Waterkeepers Australia and influenced government to raise \$227 million for river rehabilitation.

2005

Environment Victoria contributes to landmark reforms in the *Victorian Water Act* that secure environmental flows, allow water buy-backs and enshrine community consultation.

2006

'Walk Against Warming', initiated by Environment Victoria, attracts 40,000 people, and later becomes an annual event attracting 50,000 each year.

2012

With other environment groups, Environment Victoria secures the Murray-Darling Basin Plan with up to 3200 billion litres of water recovered for the river system.

2017

After years of hard-fought campaigning by Environment Victoria, Hazelwood power station is closed, with \$310 million in government transition funding allocated to the Latrobe Valley community.

2018

At the state election, Environment Victoria defends the state's renewable energy targets and climate policies, and pressures the government to make big commitments for solar power and batteries.

50 YEARS



❖ 50 YEARS ❖

Profile: Linda Parlane, campaigner, former director and life member

THE FEARSOME FOREST CAMPAIGNER

Colleagues describe her as an uncompromising, tough-as-nails campaigner. “Do they?” laughs Linda Parlane, who at first glance looks more like a librarian than a formidable environmental warrior.

New Zealand-born Parlane arrived in Melbourne as a teenager. She went on to campaign for many different environmental issues, including green transport, solar energy and climate change, but is perhaps best known for her work fighting for Australian native forests.

Her affection for forests developed gradually, she says, beginning with bushwalks at Wilsons Promontory as a high-school student and then studying botany at university. “Later, I fell in love with East Gippsland. Friends and I were thinking of living there.”

In the mid-1970s, she heard about plans for woodchipping in the area. “I remember going to a public meeting,

hearing more about the devastation it would cause and getting more involved,” she says. “Over the years, I got out into the forests more and more and was appalled by the destruction.”

Then the Franklin Dam dispute came to a head in the early 1980s, and she knew she had to put forests on the back burner. “I could see, strategically, that if we couldn’t win the Franklin then we weren’t going to win anything in Australia of national significance.”

Parlane learnt a great deal from the success of that campaign, and she brought the knowledge with her to the East Gippsland Coalition’s successful campaign for national parks in the mid-1980s.

During the 1990s she became a stand-out leader of Environment Victoria and gained a strong reputation for her determined approach, whether she was

negotiating with politicians behind closed doors, debating logging interests on live television or dealing with Amcor’s dirty tricks.

Being a young woman speaking out for the environment in a largely male-dominated era also took courage. Where did it come from? “It’s because you’re standing up for the environment, you’re not standing up for yourself,” she says. “The environment can’t stand up for itself, so we’ve got to do it.”

Parlane is proud to have been part of the team that transformed the CCV into Environment Victoria, running effective campaigns and beginning the organisation’s journey to financial independence. “I’m also proud of our work on forests and the transition to plantations. Despite bullying from the woodchip industry and unions, we ran a powerful national campaign which gained massive public support.”



— 50 YEARS —

Profile: Michele Burton, former Sustainable Living program manager

THE COMMUNITY ENGAGER

UK-born Michele Burton spent eight years at Environment Victoria running the Cool Communities program. This pioneering behaviour-change initiative targeted community groups who had slipped through the mainstream media cracks to save water and energy.

These communities, known as CALD (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse), included new migrants and refugees who spoke little English and people who were less likely to read English language newspapers or watch Australian television.

From the late 1990s through to about 2014, Burton and other Environment Victoria staff developed deep expertise on how to encourage behaviour change. Funded by state and federal governments, they recruited and trained community leaders in how to save water and energy.

In Vietnamese, the program was called Nha Dep and targeted suburbs such as Footscray and Springvale. Environment Victoria partnered

with the Australian Multicultural Foundation, the Western Bulldogs football club, broadcaster SBS and weather presenter Rob Gell to train young leaders how to reduce their community's environmental impact.

The CALD programs had their challenges. For instance, Burton recalls tensions between north and south Vietnamese Australians and the need to navigate cultural differences, such as one community's penchant for gold-coloured low-flow shower heads and another's preference for washing dishes under running water.

The program also required financial investment, and initially it was difficult to attract large numbers of participants. However, the introduction of the national carbon price in 2012 saw the momentum shift. This made funds available to help low-income Australians adapt to climate change and rising energy bills, and some of these supported Environment Victoria's work.

"It was a time that we could be innovative and there was funding

around to let us do that," Michele says. "As a result, we were able to achieve some really great outcomes for communities that would have otherwise been quite marginalised from this environmental messaging."

Environment Victoria's final sustainable living program, called Future Powered Families, operated at a huge scale. It was delivered in more than 130 languages and trained thousands of Victorians to teach their communities how to save water and energy. Environment Victoria's expertise was recognised with a national Eureka Prize for communicating climate change and nominations for the Premier's Sustainability Awards.

But just as this work was hitting its straps, Tony Abbott became Prime Minister and scrapped the carbon price. Funding for Future Powered Families was axed. Despite this, many staff who worked in these programs continue to promote behaviour change through state and local government and across the charitable sector.

Past and future

ENVIRONMENT VICTORIA WAS BORN 50 YEARS AGO OUT OF THE CAMPAIGN TO SAVE THE LITTLE DESERT, IN WESTERN VICTORIA, NOW A NATIONAL PARK. JONO LA NAUZE TOOK A TRIP TO SEE WHERE IT ALL BEGAN — ACCOMPANIED BY HIS YOUNG SON JACK.



I'm on a father-and-son road trip with my little boy Jack, travelling to north-western Victoria. For several days we explore a tiny corner of the Little Desert from our campsite at Kiata.

I have always loved arid ecosystems, and sharing them with my young son is a new delight. Pinks and purples, yellows and greens. Whenever the soil changes beneath our feet, the foliage around us changes with it. A pocket of rushes and red gums testifies to an ephemeral wetland, though water is nowhere to be seen. Walking on sand is heavy going, especially when two-year-old Jack gives up and demands a ride on my shoulders. We climb a lookout platform, and suddenly the canopy is a mottled carpet rolling out toward the epic Mount Arapiles.

We're out here to trace the origin story of Environment Victoria, the organisation I've just joined. I bring with me a draft of the history book

and listen to a podcast history of the Little Desert campaign. This is where it all started.

When I was planning the trip, I asked a few Environment Victoria veterans for tips on where to go, what to see. Some were there at the beginning, others joined along the way. I was struck by how much people love this organisation. I feel welcomed into a proud, supportive family and encouraged by people's willingness to share their wisdom.

No one can say the work we do is easy, or that there aren't dark times and even darker dreams. We do what we do because we must. But fear and hard work are not all that sustain us. There is love and hope too. So many people have been part of Environment Victoria and the broader environment movement for many decades. What compels them to keep generously giving their time and money? To step out of their

comfort zone and perform the acts of heroism, small and large, that fuel our campaigns? It must, in part, be that working together for a better world feels good.

Environment Victoria is inspired by nature, but we're still strong after 50 years because we focus on people. We have won lasting change by building a resilient movement. Our approach has adapted to the times and the context, but we have always been people-powered. We have always been made up of, and worked alongside, everyday people affected by the issues at the heart of our campaigns. People who stand up courageously in their local communities to make Victoria — and the world — a better place.

Of our fellow campers in the Little Desert, I wonder how many consider themselves a part of the movement that protected this place? How many realise that this bush is here because people before them fought to save it? It's a long weekend, and Kiata is busy. There's a circle of flash off-road camper trailers housing kids and parents who roast marshmallows each night. A middle-aged construction worker and his wife have come to explore the sandy tracks on dirt bikes — they've given up dragging their teenage kids away from the city. Millennials are well represented, including a group who look as if they have a common Middle Eastern heritage and party late but remarkably quietly, and a couple in immaculate puffer-jackets who arrive at photography's golden hour and film their well-rehearsed tent setup in time-lapse.

Are they part of our movement? That weekend, I didn't ask, but it's a question we must ask ourselves if Environment Victoria is to remain successful. To honour and carry forward the extraordinary achievements of the past 50 years, we must grow. As the population around us expands, a

people-powered movement must grow with it or diminish in influence. But Victoria's population is not just growing in size, it is also becoming more diverse. With our greatest challenges ahead of us, we need to keep building an inclusive movement led by people from as many different walks of life as possible.

The climate and extinction crises are gaining speed. The environmental calamities we have already baked in, combined with population growth and demographic change, will exert extraordinary pressures on our society. Natural disasters, water shortages and crop failures are not just imaginings from some dystopian fiction. Our challenge is to bring on an emergency-scale response while guarding against backlash

and interventions that worsen the problem. We will face division and delay if the costs and benefits are unequally distributed, if people feel left behind and unable to see their place in our story of the future. And invariably there will be those who promote false and dangerous solutions. Some will do so cynically, others out of desperation and belief that there is no alternative.

True people-powered movements are best placed to overcome such challenges. This is why after 50 years, Environment Victoria remains so strong and why we must redouble our efforts.

I do have dark dreams but I am lifted up and propelled forward by the momentum of those who came before. Everyone who has been a part

of Environment Victoria's journey is in some way a hero. Without you, bad ideas would have flourished and good ones withered. You helped preserve the wondrous diversity of life on earth. You warded off the environmental amnesia that results when future generations cannot value what they do not realise they have lost. You held open the door to a better world that is within our reach. A world where nobody has to choose between safety and comfort, between environmental sustainability and human wellbeing. That better world is possible with the imagination and determination of people like you, working together for the sake of Victoria's environment.

Thank you.



STAND UP FOR OUR ENVIRONMENT, FOREVER

Xanthorrhoea australis (grass trees) have a lifespan of up to 600 years.

Some of us grew up here, others discovered Victoria later in life. Some of us are climate activists, passionate bushwalkers or environmental pioneers, but we share one thing in common: a love for Victoria's environment.

Environment Victoria's important work to protect the places we love is powered by acts of giving. And the most extraordinary gift you will ever give is in your Will.

A gift to Environment Victoria in your Will can help protect Victoria's unique plants and animals, cut the pollution that causes climate change, and ensure future generations can enjoy our home as much as we do.

If you would like more information or would like to discuss how you can leave a gift in your Will to Environment Victoria, please contact: Key Relationships Manager Lena Herrera Piekarski at l.herrera@environmentvictoria.org.au or call 93418100.

Leaving a future gift to Environment Victoria in your Will is an exceptional legacy for future Victorians who will inherit this beautiful state. It's a simple change when you next review your Will.

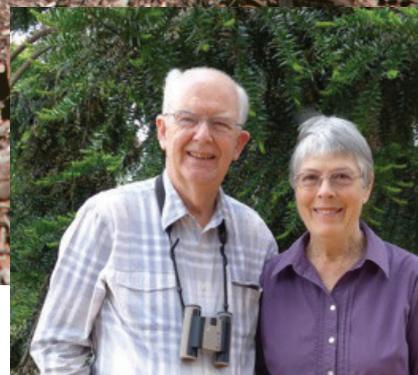
The wording below is a guide for your solicitor or trustee: "I give to Environment Victoria Inc. (ABN: 84 495 053 605) of Level 2, 60 Leicester Street, Carlton, Vic, 3053 for the purpose of safeguarding Victoria's environment [the residue [or...%] of the residue of my estate] or [...% of my estate] or [the sum of \$....] or [specified property....] free of all debts, duties or taxes and declare that the receipt of an authorised officer shall be a sufficient discharge for my executor(s)."

THE SNAPES' STORY

A lifelong passion for Victoria's beautiful environment inspired a campaign to protect the Little Desert.



A male mallee fowl (*Leipoa ocellata*) on his nest mound. The Kiata Lowan Sanctuary was reserved in 1955 to protect the bird, and later became part of the Little Desert National Park.



Brian and Diana Snape

BRIAN AND DIANA SNAPE HAVE

always loved Australian nature. When they were in their early 30s, they'd take off from Melbourne in their little Renault 10 most weekends and go bush. One of their favourite destinations was a semi-arid patch of scrub and trees in Victoria's north-west called the Little Desert. "On a Friday night we'd have the car packed up and ready," Brian recalls. "After I got home from work, we'd have a quick bite of dinner and head off at 7pm." Just after midnight they'd roll in to the Kiata Lowan Sanctuary and set up their tent in the beam of the Renault's headlights. "We'd wake up on Saturday morning to the beautiful bird calls of the Little Desert. It was just heaven."

A typical Little Desert weekend included driving to nearby waterholes, spotting plants and checking on a breeding pair of lowan (malleefowl) that local ranger, Keith Hateley, had dubbed Romeo and Juliet. "We used to discreetly check their mound," Brian says. "On every visit, we'd go for a walk through the bush and have a look at the nest. We saw Romeo and Juliet quite a few times over the years." On Sunday afternoon, they'd pack up their tent, make the long drive back to Melbourne, and get ready for work on Monday.

But then the couple learnt that their favourite spot was in trouble. It was the late 1960s, and the Minister for Agriculture, Sir William McDonald,

wanted to subdivide the Little Desert for farming. When conservation groups began to build a resistance campaign, Brian and Diana joined in.

The Little Desert was saved by the collective efforts of those conservationists. This campaign also gave birth to Environment Victoria, which has played a key role in putting environmental concerns at the centre of Victorian politics. So have Brian and Diana, who have supported the organisation with donations, encouragement and personal enthusiasm over five decades. Brian says, "I think they're just an extraordinary, passionate, effective group."

Victoria's emissions reduction targets explained



Cat Nadel,
Climate Campaigner

Aerial view of Yallourn coal-burning power station.



Victoria's emissions reduction targets will set the trajectory of our state's efforts to reduce pollution and solve the climate crisis. Climate campaigner Cat Nadel answers key questions on this vital policy.

WE'RE IN A CLIMATE CRISIS, AND the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has told us we have only 10 years to take bold, transformative action. This is the period covered by Victoria's emission reduction targets for 2025 and 2030, which the Premier will set in the next six months.

Climate justice demands we rapidly cut pollution, but this will mean significant economic changes, so we need government to support communities through the transition and create thousands of good jobs in clean energy.

What are Victoria's emission reduction targets?

Victoria's Climate Change Act 2017 legislates for the state to reach zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. The Premier and the climate minister must also set interim targets for the years 2025 and 2030. These targets are due next March, so this is a critical time for action on climate in Victoria.

In June the government tabled advice from an independent panel recommending that emissions be cut

from their 2005 levels by 32–39% by 2025 and 45–60% by 2030.

These targets are unacceptable. They give no chance of limiting warming to 1.5 degrees and could see the planet shoot past 2 degrees. To keep warming to 1.5 degrees requires cuts of at least 45–50% by 2025 and 65–80% by 2030. We need to apply pressure to make sure the government adopts the strongest targets possible.

What's the difference between 1.5 and 2 degrees?

The difference between 1.5 and 2 degrees of global warming is the difference between saving the world's coral reefs and losing them, between people adjusting with difficulty to a warmer climate and having millions lose their homes and their lives to extreme weather and rising seas. It's a big difference.

What will higher targets mean for Victoria?

These targets will influence every decision made on climate in Victoria for the next ten years.

Next year, ministers will need to

THANK YOU!

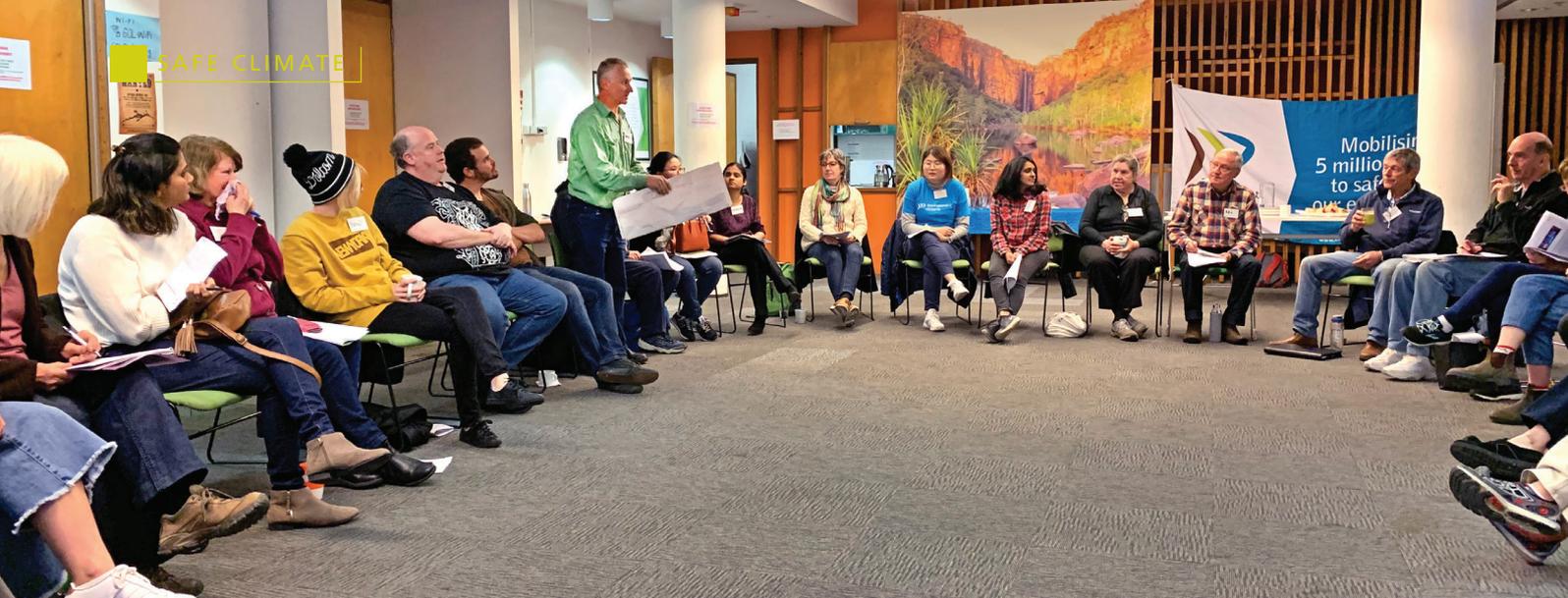
To everyone who has donated to our climate campaign, calling for strong Victorian emissions targets.

announce 'sector pledges' determining how our most polluting sectors – electricity, transport, direct combustion and agriculture – reduce emissions. Higher targets will mean more investment in renewables, more support for farmers to cut emissions, more public transport and more clean technology and design.

The independent panel found that stronger targets for 2030 are the cheapest way to achieve a net zero emissions economy by 2050.

We believe that with the right policy settings, the transition can be achieved in a way that is fast but also fair.

The IPCC says every bit of warming matters. Every year matters. Every choice matters. In Victoria, the government has to make a crucial choice with huge long-term implications for our future. With enough community pressure we can make sure it does the right thing.



Environment Victoria volunteers at a planning session.

Community action to cut pollution



Jane Stabb,
Community Organising
Program Manager

Community pressure can push the Victorian government to adopt the strongest possible emissions reduction targets – here's how.

THE NEXT FEW MONTHS COULD

decide how much pollution Victoria cuts from the atmosphere over the next ten years. It's a really important moment.

The Victorian government is weighing up our emissions reduction targets, and they're considering advice from an independent panel, which recommended pollution cuts that are not ambitious enough to stop the worst impacts of climate change.

You can be sure the government is hearing lots from the big energy companies that make money polluting our air and water, including the owners of coal-burning power stations in the Latrobe Valley. We need to make sure they hear from the community too.

Over the next six months, people in communities all across Victoria will be meeting their local Labor MPs and asking them to raise their voices in support of stronger targets to cut pollution.

In order to build serious pressure on the Victorian government, and to make sure the targets they set are in line with community expectations and ambition, we want to meet as many Labor MPs as we can.

At these meetings, Environment Victoria supporters and volunteers will explain why they are concerned about climate change, why they want strong pollution targets, and why they want their local MPs to speak up in party meetings and to their cabinet colleagues about the upcoming decision on our pollution targets.

The more meetings our supporters and volunteers have across Victoria, the more pressure we can build within the Victorian Labor government to do the right thing.

Can you email your local MP to request a meeting?

As well as meeting their local MPs, our volunteer groups are building support for strong pollution targets within their communities.

Starting next month, volunteers will be out and about talking to people on main streets and at markets, gathering petition signatures and talking about what climate and clean energy means for their communities.

These local conversations (combined with a steady stream of petitions coming through to local MPs) will help build pressure on the Victorian government to enact strong pollution reduction targets that will establish Victoria as a leader in the transition away from coal and do our bit to avoid the worst impacts of climate change.

Head to envict.org/EmissionsTargets to sign up to meet your local MP.

If it's your first time meeting a politician, you can sign up to get a call from a volunteer who can help you plan your meeting, send you some preparation material and make sure you've got our info sheet to hand over to your MP in the meeting.

Remember – it's their job to represent you, and they can only do that properly



Above: Geelong locals Greg, Sally and Vicki met their MP Christine Couzens in September to talk about Victorian emissions reduction targets.

if you tell them how you feel. If climate change is a huge concern to you, let your MP know, and make sure they can raise your voice within government. Right now is a really important moment to do it.

SIGN UP!

Email your MP to ask for a meeting about Victoria's Emission Reduction Targets. Tell them why urgent climate action is so important to you and your community.

envict.org/EmissionsTargets



Beyond Coal

Volunteers, supporters and staff at the launch of the Beyond Coal campaign in June.

Victoria's brown coal power stations are some of Australia's oldest and dirtiest, which is why we've launched our 'Beyond Coal' campaign. Climate campaigner Cat Nadel gives an update on the early progress and next steps.



Cat Nadel,
Climate Campaigner

VICTORIA'S BEYOND COAL CAMPAIGN is officially underway! We kicked off in June with a public event featuring speeches by Gunaikurnai traditional owner Lidia Thorpe, Colin Long of the Victorian Trades Hall and Bronya Lipski of Environmental Justice Australia.

We're letting the world know that Yallourn is Australia's dirtiest and most unreliable power station, and we need to phase out coal power in the next decade

We've started by placing pressure on Yallourn's owner, EnergyAustralia, and engaging with their staff and customers.

And it's working!

EnergyAustralia wanted Yallourn to keep polluting for another 13 years, but on 25 June the *Herald Sun* ran a front page story saying it might close early.

Then on 22 August EnergyAustralia's CEO, Catherine Tanna, said Victoria's increasing renewable energy production was forcing the power station to compete on price with wind and solar farms. She hinted that Yallourn might close early if the Andrews government sets high emission reduction targets (See more about the targets on page 15).

Public discussion is now about when Yallourn will close, not if it will.

This means spending more time addressing people's fears and concerns. We're commissioning research to show how Victoria can:

- build enough clean energy and storage to replace what Yallourn produces
- create new economic opportunities in the Latrobe Valley so the closure goes smoothly.

Towards a just transition

The Latrobe Valley has powered Victoria for decades, and it's the government's duty to help people there find new work as coal power stations are phased out.

This 'just transition' approach is an important part of our campaigns. We've hired a new Senior Organiser, Laura Melville, who will work with community leaders in the Latrobe Valley to hold governments and industry to account. (Find out more about Laura's work on the next page.)

Big moments coming up:

Right now there are three critical opportunities to speed up Victoria's transition from coal to clean energy.

1. The Victorian government is setting pollution reduction targets for 2025 and 2030. This will determine how fast Victoria transitions away from coal.
2. The Victorian Environment Protection Authority (EPA) is reviewing the licences of the three coal power stations. We've been campaigning for them to put limits on pollution – stay tuned for more news!
3. Winning the energy story wars. We're organising now for summer, when the hot weather draws attention to climate impacts and places stress on the electricity grid.

THANK YOU

THANK YOU to the thousands of people who donated to the campaign, and signed the petition to EnergyAustralia.

Just Transitions in the Latrobe Valley

With the right planning, support and investment we can reduce the impact of coal closures in the Latrobe Valley and make sure the community benefits from new sustainable industries.



Laura Melville,
Latrobe Valley Organiser



FOR DECADES, UNCERTAINTY HAS clouded the future of the Latrobe Valley, with fears of looming job losses in the shift away from coal, which has been a major employer.

But now the future is arriving fast, there are plenty of reasons to be optimistic. Done right, action on climate change can lead to new projects and jobs in regional Australia, and this is already starting to happen. The Latrobe Valley Authority (LVA) established to support workers and communities through the transition is setting a new way forward for regional development.

Already the LVA has helped attract new industries to the region. Construction has started on the SEA electric vehicle factory, which is set to employ 500 people in Morwell. A new hi-tech precinct will promote research, business incubation, new product development, start-up support, and education and training, while a Victorian GovHub will bring hundreds of public sector jobs to the region.

The Valley's ready access to infrastructure also attracts renewable energy businesses to the region. Solar farms are being built, wind projects are underway, and our friends at Earthworker Energy Manufacturing Co-op have solar hot water systems

rolling out the factory door.

One of the most exciting proposals is the "Star of the South", Australia's first offshore wind farm. The project has the potential to deliver clean energy to 1.2 million homes and create thousands of construction jobs, as well as new manufacturing and supply opportunities in South Gippsland and the Latrobe Valley.

This is a good start. But large-scale structural change takes time, resources and certainty. The Latrobe Valley will see three more power stations close in the next 10 to 20 years. To achieve long-term success, it needs a permanent planning authority that is deeply embedded in the community and understands the local history, culture and challenges.

But currently the Latrobe Valley Authority only has funding until mid-2020, which isn't enough. That's why we're calling on the government to guarantee the long-term future of the Latrobe Valley Authority and ensure it is set up to succeed.

By planning for the transition away from coal, providing educational opportunities, worker transfer schemes and local procurement, the Latrobe Valley can continue to be an energy hub well into the future.

INTRODUCING LAURA

I grew up in an East Gippsland timber town on the frontline of the fight against old-growth logging. This has given me a first-hand understanding of the challenges and opportunities that come with transitioning a community away from an environmentally damaging industry.

I believe that addressing the climate crisis can provide regional and rural communities with opportunities to thrive. I'm excited to be working with community members in the Latrobe Valley and Gippsland who are building a future beyond coal that benefits everyone.

— **Laura Melville,**
Latrobe Valley Organiser



Weedy Sea Dragon off Flinders, Westernport Bay.

PHOTO: RICHARD WYLLIE

Dear Jono, I want to continue protecting Victoria's environment for our kids and grandkids.

Please make this a donation by credit card:

(All donations over \$2 are tax deductible.)

\$50 \$100 \$250 \$1000 Your choice \$ _____

Please make this a monthly donation.

Please find enclosed: Cheque or Money Order (payable to Environment Victoria Inc.)

Or please debit my credit card: Visa MasterCard Amex

Cardholder's name: _____ Expiry date: ____ / ____ Signature: _____

Card number:

Please send me info about how I can make a gift to Environment Victoria in my Will.

Are your personal details correct on your letter? Or are you moving soon? Please update your personal information here if necessary.

PERSONAL DETAILS

Title: _____ First name: _____ Last name: _____

Address: _____

Suburb: _____ State: _____ Postcode: _____

Email: _____

Mobile: _____ Home: _____

Please complete this form, cut off this page and return it to **Reply Paid 12575, A'Beckett Street, Melbourne, VIC 8006** or visit www.environmentvictoria.org.au and make your donation online. **Thank you for your generosity!**

Personal information is collected to process donations, issue tax receipts and keep you updated about our work. Please contact us at the address below if you wish to limit the use of your personal information or stop receiving direct marketing material from Environment Victoria. Our privacy policy is available at environmentvictoria.org.au/privacy and outlines how you can access or correct your personal information, who we disclose your personal information to (including overseas recipients) and how you can lodge a complaint. Please tick if you do NOT want to receive communications from other organisations. Occasionally we allow like-minded organisations to contact you with information that may be of interest to you, including organisations outside Australia. Those organisations allow us to do the same and this way we can reach more people with vital information.



50th Birthday Celebration!

30 OCTOBER 2019



You're invited to Environment Victoria's 50th birthday celebration!

It's time to celebrate! This year Environment Victoria turns 50. Catch up with friends, be the first to watch our history film and hear inspiring stories from five decades of campaigning for our environment. Plus there'll be food & drinks, a special awards ceremony, copies of our new book *People for the Planet...* and birthday cake!

WHEN

30 October 2019. AGM from 5:30pm,
Celebration from 6:30pm.

WHERE

Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation, Auditorium,
535 Elizabeth Street,
Melbourne, VIC 3000

RSVP

envict.org/50years or by calling 9341 8100
(RSVPs close Friday 25 October)

WHO'S WHO AT



Chief Executive Officer
Jono La Nauze

CAMPAIGNS & PROGRAMS

Campaign Manager
Nicholas Aberle

Healthy Rivers and Nature
Campaign Manager
Juliet Le Feuvre

Healthy Rivers Campaigner
Tyler Rotchel

Safe Climate Campaigner
Cat Nadel

Senior Campaigner
Taegen Edwards

Campaigner
Rai Miralles

Community Organising
Program Manager
Jane Stabb

Latrobe Valley Organiser
Laura Melville

Community Organiser
Adele Neale

Data Support Officer
Chante Bock

Communications Managers
Alex Merory, Greg Foyster

Communications Co-ordinator
Cameron Wheatley

Digital Campaigner
Sawsan Alfayadh

OPERATIONS

Finance Manager
Kate Rogers

Accounts Officer
Jing Lu

Administration Assistant
Angela Nicopoulos

Office Manager
Cate Hoyle

Fundraising Director
Jonathan Storey

Fundraising Officer
Heather Bruer

Key Relationships Manager
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REGULAR VOLUNTEERS

Environment Victoria would like to thank our amazing crew of regular volunteers, who are now too numerous to mention.

TALK TO US:

Phone (03) 9341 8100

Email admin@environmentvictoria.org.au

PO Box 12575
A'Beckett Street, Victoria, 8006
www.environmentvictoria.org.au



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