

Community Resilience Newsletter

Wye River Fire

COMMUNITY
RESILIENCE

WYE RIVER | SEPARATION CREEK

30 MAY 2016

This newsletter is issued by Colac Otway Shire to provide the community key updates about recovery following the fire.

Community Vision Workshop

All members of the Wye River and Separation Creek communities are invited to participate in the Community Vision Workshop, to be held in Wye River on Saturday 11th June.

This workshop will provide everyone - full and part time residents, holiday makers and campers and business owners with the opportunity to contribute to the discussion about the future vision and guiding principles for Wye River and Separation Creek.

The Workshop will be facilitated by a community engagement specialist and will discuss community values, the community vision and moving towards the future.

This workshop is being held in addition to the regular monthly Community Meetings in Wye River and Melbourne.

It is intended to have only a single workshop in order to bring the entire community together to have the discussion about their vision for the future Wye River and Separation Creek townships and to facilitate one discussion that everyone has the opportunity to participate in and hear others views.

For those unable to attend for various reasons there will be information available via the WyeSep Connect portal.

There will also be an online validation process so all those not present can feed into the ongoing discussion and refinement of the Vision and Principles, ideas and priorities.

To assist Melbourne based people attend we are arranging transport to bring you down for the day.

To RSVP for the Workshop please e-mail the Bushfire Recovery Information Centre or phone 5232 9400 and select 1.

What's On

Community Meeting

Sunday 5th June, 10:30am-12 noon followed by a Community Catch-Up

Wye River SLSC

Community Meeting

Thursday 9th June, 5:30 – 7pm

Richmond Town Hall

Community Vision Workshop

Saturday 11th June, from 10:30

Wye River SLSC

A community lunch will held as part of the workshop.

Controlling our Weeds and Helping our Birds Workshop

Sunday 12th June, 11am with a community lunch afterwards and the planting of 300 native plants

Wye River SLSC

If you are interested in taking advantage of this transport service please call the Bushfire Recovery Information Centre to register.

A meeting point in the CBD will be organised once the numbers for the bus service are determined and a Geelong pick-up could also be organised if there is demand.

Ideas, questions and suggestions can be directed to the CRC Community Representatives or Bushfire Recovery Division by e-mail

crcwyesepcommunityreps@gmail.com or

bushfire.recovery@colacotway.vic.gov.au

From the Mayor

There is a lot going on in both Wye River and Separation Creek and throughout the region, with the clean-up more than three quarters complete, the One Stop Shop providing assistance to those preparing to build and those starting their research and there are a number of events coming later in the year.

The Great Ocean Road has always been a spectacularly beautiful and popular place to visit and we are lucky enough to call it home.

Earlier in the May the Great Ocean Road was opened for runners in the Great Ocean Road Marathon and later in November, the Great Victorian Bike ride will travel our beautiful road.

There are great opportunities for local businesses to become involved and benefit.

Communities along the Great Ocean Road are invited to a public meeting on the 8th of June, in Apollo Bay, to discuss how to maximise the economic benefits of the 2016 Great Victorian Bike Ride.

This year's event in November/December will feature a rest day in Apollo Bay providing businesses in the region with the opportunity to significantly benefit from 4000 bike riders who are expected to inject more than \$100,000 into each town they visit.

It could be great to include Wye/Sep as one of the towns to benefit from all of these riders and supporters.

Local business are invited to connect with the Business and Tourism Work Group and discuss ideas for economic development for the towns and region.

From next Tuesday, 7th June, this newsletter will move to fortnightly and the updates will focus on the work of each of the four Work Groups.

I invite you to connect with the Work Group leaders and discuss your ideas for projects.

I also look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the Community Vision Workshop to be held in Wye River on Saturday 11th June.

- **Frank Buchanan**

From the Emergency Management Commissioner

The landscape of Wye River and Separation Creek has changed and we are now experiencing the impact of the clean-up phase, which has resulted in building debris being removed and unsafe trees being treated or felled.

There has been concern raised by the community on the management of bushfire affected trees.

To ensure you have all the information about the assessment and treatment of trees, we recently provided a series of documents from expert arborists, arboriculturalists, the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning and Grocon.

The information outlines the actions that have been taken to minimise the risks presented by bushfire affected trees on both private and public land across the Wye River and Separation Creek townships, along with a letter from myself. I encourage you to read these documents, which can be found online at WyeSep Connect.

We are heading towards the six month mark since the Christmas Day fire and during this time we have seen significant change within the Wye River and Separation Creek townships, both physically on the ground and within the community.

There have been many government departments, agencies, shires, contractors, NGOs and local businesses that, throughout this time, have put in considerable amounts of time, energy and effort to support the resettlement of the townships.

There have been many actions taken that had to be done, such as managing public safety risks, however there is still plenty of opportunities for the community to help shape the future of the townships. Whether that is through the work of the expert panel and the guidance they can provide to make the town more resilient, or the development of a playground and foreshore that is reflective of the community.

Over the coming weeks and months there will be many opportunities to help shape the future of Wye River and Separation Creek and I encourage everyone to keep an eye on the community calendar on WyeSep Connect for engagement activities, to speak with the CRC members and the Work Group members, and utilise the online forum.

- **Craig Lapsley**

One Stop Shop

The Clean-up is now three quarters complete, land owners have access to all of the technical data relating to their property and many are now approaching the planning and building process stage.

The One Stop Shop team has continued to expand in recent weeks with a number of new staff coming on board.

There is extensive Building and Planning expertise and advice available including:

Town Planning – experienced Planners are available to provide advice on planning permit requirements, the planning processes and guidance on design proposals.

They will also ensure that advice on rebuilding is co-ordinated with other areas of expertise including on-site wastewater treatment, building permit requirements, specialist advice on building materials and bushfire resilient design, landslip and drainage/engineering.

Wastewater Treatment – Shire Environmental Health Officers and Coffey wastewater management specialists can advise on what requirements apply to on-site treatment of wastewater for new homes, what information needs to be submitted with a planning permit application, and the approval process for wastewater systems.

Coffey wastewater management consultants will be available to discuss wastewater system design options and explore options for alternatives where sites are highly constrained.

For residents meeting to discuss a house that is being rebuilt, Coffey will provide a short summary of the site specific information available on wastewater management for the specified property.

This information will help guide residents on design options, but will not avoid the need to engage a consultant to prepare a detailed Land Capability Assessment for the planning application.

Advice on building materials and building in Bushfire Prone Areas – Technical experts from the Victorian Building Authority (VBA) will attend appointments to assist residents seeking information on design suggestions and building materials which respond to the Bushfire Attack Level (BAL) construction standards specified in the Planning Scheme and the building regulations.

The technical experts can assist residents in developing a cost effective building design.

Building – Residents will be able to access advice on the building permit process including building permit requirements and other relevant building approvals which may be required. Residents have a choice of engaging Council's bushfire building surveyor to assess a Building Permit application, or they can engage a private building surveyor.

Drainage/Engineering – advice is available on drainage of storm water runoff for new structures, as well as Council requirements for new driveways, parking bays and access through the road reserve, including retaining wall structures. Separate permits are required from Council for new retaining structures in road reserves and it is important these issues are incorporated into the early concept designs for houses.

Geotechnical – Residents will need to engage a geotechnical practitioner to prepare a geotechnical assessment to support planning applications. Advice may be provided on specific issues on a referral basis where required.

Property owners are invited to start discussing their ideas with One Stop Shop staff early on and gain an understanding of the requirements for their building design and the planning application process.

It may be helpful and cost effective to start discussion with the One Stop Shop before engaging professional services.

Residents must make an appointment with the 'One Stop Shop' service to ensure the right experts can be on hand to guide you through the building process. Appointments can be held either in person or via teleconference.

To make an appointment, please call the Colac Otway Shire Bushfire Recovery Information Centre on (03) 5232 9400 and select 1 or e-mail bushfire.recovery@colacotway.vic.gov.au

When making an appointment, please advise which particular area of expertise is required, as this will assist Council to ensure that the relevant officers are present for the discussion.

Coffey will be available for appointments in Melbourne and Wye River on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays.

Wye River Playground Renewal Project

About 20 community members joined Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) and Otway Coast Committee (OCC) representatives at Wye River SLSC on Sunday to further develop the design of the Wye River playground upgrade project.

The playground upgrade, a Victorian Government commitment, had been an engaging topic of discussion during the 'open house' series of workshops in March and April, and last weekend's session helped all stakeholders continue to bring this project to life.

To ensure the workshops captured the thoughts and ideas from those who will benefit most from the project, local kids, Wye River CFA Brigade Captain and local school bus driver Roy Moriarty had earlier distributed worksheets for children to complete and bring along to the session.

With the help of the City of Melbourne's Studio Design Team, the workshop enabled children, parents and stakeholders to help shape playground themes and play spaces to be included in the design brief.

Participants worked informally together, contributing to the analysis and providing stories and ideas through conversations and sticky notes.

The outcomes from this workshop will now be incorporated into a preliminary design sketch, which will be shared with all by the end of June.

Weeds and Birds Workshop

The impact of the Christmas Day Bushfire on the natural environment was significant and helping the natural environment recover and thrive is the motivation behind the upcoming Weeds and Birds Workshop.

Organised by Wye Weed Warriors and Wye to Wongarra Landcare, the workshop will be hands on and will provide the opportunity to learn about caring for birds and the use of bird boxes, understanding weeds and how they can be killed, which local plants and vegetation is best for the town and wildlife.

The workshop will also cover the WyeSep Weed Strategy, the feral cat threat and details of local suppliers.

At the conclusion of the workshop, a BBQ will be held for all participants prior to everyone heading over to Paddy's Path for a working bee to replant vegetation. If you are coming to the working bee,

please wear sturdy shoes and appropriate clothing/sun protection.

Speakers at the Workshop will include staff from Colac Otway Shire and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning along with:

Dr Libby Riches, vegetation expert from Southern Otway Landcare Network. Libby will explain weed control and her role as project manager for the Wye/Sep weed removal project.

Rex Brown, landowner and leader of Wye Weed Warriors, Wye to Wongarra Landcare, who have been attacking local weeds before the fire.

Dr Jay Robinson, project lead for nesting boxes. Jay has collated information about habitat for our local birds, is organising distribution of nesting boxes and is working with local Men's Sheds for production of bird boxes.

Barney Langham from Surf Coast Tree Services. Barney is an experienced arborist and tree contractor who has introduced the innovative 'Habitat Hollows', as part of his work in habitat pruning for Grocon.

Can you help?

For questions, to book a nesting box or if you can help at the working bee, please call:

Rex Brown 0408 006 992 or Yvonne Sheppard 0407 883 116 or visit www.wyeseconnect.info

Wellbeing and Personal Support

Free Health Checks available

The Lorne Community Hospital and Lorne Medical Centre has extended its offer to provide comprehensive medical health checks to all Wye River and Separation Creek residents.

There will be no out of pocket expenses for residents who decide to take this positive step for their own health.

During the appointment additional ways to support your health can be discussed, and FREE Flu shots will also be offered.

Wye River and Separation Creek community members can make an appointment for the free service by phoning Lorne Medical Centre on 5289 4333.