

Grampians Landscape Management Plan – community workshop questions

The following questions were received from community members across the six public workshops for the Grampians Landscape Management Plan. The questions were submitted on question cards provided at the workshop and have been presented as they were written. Where there were similar questions they have been noted as the same question submitted twice, for example (x2).

The questions have been grouped by theme in the left column and Parks Victoria has responded to each question in the right column.

Question from the community (by theme)	Parks Victoria response
<p>Grampians Landscape Management Plan (scope and process):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there landscapes outside of the Parks area that will be included in the new plan? • Will there be a review of how well Parks Victoria followed the 2003 Management Plan? • Why do the landscape area maps not show the other points of Crown land between the Black Range and the Grampians? • Is the State Park between the Grampians National Parks and Black Range State Forest included in the landscape? If not, why not? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The scope of the plan includes the Grampians National Park, Black Range State Park and some small nearby reserves. These are outlined on the Engage Victoria website > <i>Discussion Guide 1</i> - https://engage.vic.gov.au/grampians-management-plan - Yes. The existing Grampians National Park Management Plan and Black Range State Park Management Plan are being reviewed as part of the process to develop the new Grampians Landscape Management Plan. - The Grampians landscape area incorporates 14 areas totalling more than 180,000ha: Grampians National Park (168,241 ha), Black Range State Park (11,727 ha), Brady Swamp State Game Reserve (223 ha), Fyans Creek Bushland Reserve (68 hectares), Mount William Creek Streamside Reserve (38 ha), Cherrypool Highway Park (20 ha), Lady Somers Bridge Streamside Reserve (16 ha), Mount Difficult Plantation Campground (12.5 ha), Moyston West Bushland Reserve (7.3 ha), Rows Bushland Reserve (6.3 ha), Millers Creek Bushland Reserve (4.6 ha), Brambuk - The National Park and Cultural Centre Park (1.7 ha), Mount Talbot Scenic Reserve and Red Rock Bushland Reserve - Black Range State Park is included in the planning area.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why is Mount Arapiles and the Dundas Range not included in the Gariwerd landscape? • ‘Tight timelines’ were mentioned several times at tonight’s meeting. Will these timelines drive the result rather than user requirements? • Is the management plan being drawn up to fit within an overall budget, or is the budget for managing the park determined by this plan? • Can wildlife corridors be developed between the Grampians and the Black Range? • How will the management plan be adaptable to changes throughout the implementation period? • Is the draft Management Plan in existence? • When will we change the name officially to Grampians Gariwerd? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mount Arapiles-Tooan State Park is part of another landscape planning area - the Wimmera landscape. Therefore, Mount Arapiles and the Dundas Range are not included in this Grampians Landscape Management Plan. - The management plan will be finalised following careful consideration of public feedback, reviews of existing management plans, park assessments and research, trends in visitation and park uses, and best-practice park management strategies for the protection, conservation and enjoyment of the environment. This management process is shorter than other plan developments, however, we have robust processes to ensure the resulting plan will be able to effectively guide management direction. - The plan will provide the basis for Parks Victoria to develop annual programs of work and budgets, and for identifying areas of the park that are appropriate for different activities. - The management plan will consider opportunities to work with adjacent land managers for habitat and conservation outcomes, for example, weed and pest management, habitat corridors, and fire and water management. - The plan will have strategies that are flexible to change where there is a recognised need for adaptive management. Where there may be significant change required in the future, the management plan may be amended. - No, a draft plan has not yet been developed. We are seeking community input early in the process to share our challenges and collect your ideas. A draft Grampians Landscape Management Plan will be developed by mid-2020. - Aboriginal place name renaming is being considered in the planning process, and any specific opportunities will be consulted on when the draft plan is released.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grampians National Park is one of only a couple of parks which has an Advisory Group. Is that something that is up for discussion in the plan? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parks Victoria is continuing to engage with the Grampians Advisory Group including discussions about the role of the group going forward.
<p><u>Grampians Landscape Management Plan (climbing and SPAs):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will the SPAs be rezoned in the new plan? (x4) What capacity is there within Parks Victoria to make changes to climbing bans before the drafting and implementation of the new management plan? Will Parks Victoria be assessing every crag within the SPAs to assess the precise impacts on cultural sites of the environment, and explore mitigation options? Will there be a climbing management plan within the Grampians Landscape Management Plan? Is climbing going to be defined as a recreation or a sport in the new plan? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The way in which management zones, including Special Protection Areas, are applied across the Grampians landscape will be assessed as part of this process. No decisions have yet been made. Climbing and other activities have been restricted in Special Protection Areas of the national park as a response to increased incidences of damage to both natural and cultural values. Climbing has not been a permitted activity within the park's SPAs since 2003. Parks Victoria is undertaking assessments with Traditional Owners to further identify areas of cultural and environmental significance, and understand the potential impact of activities in those areas. No. The Grampians Landscape Management Plan will provide the framework for managing the access and impacts from the range of recreation activities undertaken, but will not have specific management plans for each activity within the park. Parks Victoria is communicating with climbing representative groups about a range of issues including the group's proposal for a Victorian Climbing Management Plan. As with the many other activities undertaken in the Grampians parks and reserves, rock climbing has evolved over the years and the plan needs to recognise the different categories of climbing and how they will be managed.

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<p>Grampians Landscape Management Plan (recreation management in the park):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will Parks Victoria educate themselves on the activities that go on in the park when they review the recreational opportunities in the development of the new plan? • There is concern within the bushwalking community that a number of popular walking trails will be closed. Have Parks Victoria already decided which walking trails will be closed? (x3) • Will the new plan better describe and provide for vehicle tracks within the park? • Will Parks Victoria consider doing away with the current requirement to book campsites for up to six people, as this leads to excessive costs for some users? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parks Victoria is consulting with a range of representative groups for key recreation activities to understand the way they would like to use the Grampians landscape. - There are no current plans to close existing legal and popular walking trails. From time-to-time the safety of tracks and trails is impacted by natural weather events and the planned burning program. Such closures are typically temporary while public safety or environmental responses are undertaken. - The management plan will define all vehicle road networks that are open to public vehicles. - Campsite booking is based on the campsite area, not the number of people who camp in that area. However, the Victorian Government acknowledges the importance of reducing camping costs in our National Parks. Under the recently announced Great Outdoors Package, camping fees have halved since 1 July 2019. You can find out more about camping in the Grampians here: https://www.parks.vic.gov.au/places-to-see/parks/grampians-national-park
<p>Traditional Owner Partnerships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who are the Grampians Traditional Owner groups? • Is there any current or proposed Native Title over any area of the Grampians National Park? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parks Victoria has been working to develop the new management plan in partnership with Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation, Barengi Gadjin Land Council Aboriginal Corporation, and Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owner Aboriginal Corporation. - In September 2016, a native title application was entered on the Register of Native Title Claims. The composition of the Gariwerd native title claim group included the Barengi Gadjin Land Council Aboriginal Corporation,

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many people belong to the three Traditional Owner Groups? • What does joint management with Traditional Owners look like for the other users of the park? • How or in what way (i.e. process) do the Traditional Owners set the vision and future for landscape management? • Why are Traditional Owners partners in the process with more decision-making power than other user groups? (x2) 	<p>Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owner Aboriginal Corporation and Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A non-extinguishment Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) was successfully negotiated in June 2018. In 2019 the native title claim was discontinued, however the ILUA remains. - The number of people within the Traditional Owner groups is managed by each group. Parks Victoria does not have information about this. - Joint management is a term used to describe a formal partnership arrangement between Traditional Owners and the State of Victoria where both share their knowledge to manage specific national parks and other protected areas. Under joint management, Traditional Owner aspirations set the overall management directions of the parks, however, community input and government policy are also paramount to the management of the park. You can read more about joint management here - https://www.parks.vic.gov.au/managing-country-together - Parks Victoria is developing the Grampians Landscape Management Plan in partnership with Traditional Owner groups. This means they sit on our project decision-making group, and are involved in the deliberation of the final management plan.
<p>Current management of the landscape:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does Parks Victoria interact with the relevant bushfire management authority? Who is that authority? • Will Parks Victoria re-consider their burning program so that the landscape will not be changed or environment not destroyed? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The relevant fire authority for the Grampians Landscape is the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP). Parks Victoria supports DELWP to prepare for, fight and recover from bushfires on public land. - Parks Victoria implements burning programs in line with the strategy developed by the bushfire management authority DELWP. You can read more information about their fire strategy here - https://www.ffm.vic.gov.au/bushfire-fuel-and-risk-management/planned-burning-in-victoria

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why are the post-fire recovery and re-opening processes so long? Is it budget or staff shortage? • Can the Grampians National Park borders be increased as land becomes available? • How successful have the pest removal programs been – feral cats and the aerial shooting program (deer and goats)? • What has happened with the MacKenzie Falls upgrades? • What is the current rubbish policy? Can rubbish be managed better? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recognising the environmental and cultural values of national parks, bushfire recovery programs are exhaustive, from thorough post-event assessments and insurance claims, through to allocation of funding, project planning and then implementation. The recent fires and floods within the park were on a scale never seen before in this park. Often, these events also create an opportunity to review and redesign assets such as the new Troopers Creek Campground to better meet the current needs of visitors. The 2014 Grampians bushfire recovery program was completed this year with more than \$4 million of works. - There are currently no plans to extend the borders of the Grampians National Park, which is Victoria’s fourth largest park. - The Grampians Arc program, a fox baiting program on private and public land, is showing huge success which has led to the re-release of the Brush-tailed rock wallabies in the park. Parks Victoria also recently received significant funding under the Biodiversity Response Planning process to undertake additional pest management in the park. The success of these programs will be monitored throughout the projects. - The funds allocated in the overall Grampians Recovery program were insufficient to cover the cost of the proposed works as well as major redevelopment of the MacKenzie Falls site. Subsequently, Parks Victoria redirected these funds to other important projects as part of the broader Grampians Fire Recovery program. Parks Victoria is committed to improving facilities in the MacKenzie Falls Precinct to enhance the visitor experience and has prepared detailed designs to upgrade the carpark and adjacent visitor area, should funding become available in future. - The current policy is that all visitors should take home their own rubbish as Parks Victoria does not provide any waste collection points in the park. Parks Victoria is working with local governments and the Grampians Central West Waste Resource Recovery Group to look into ways to improve rubbish management.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When will the Zumsteins cottages be completed? Why the delay? • How does Parks Victoria ensure visitors respect the park (for example, fire safety and rubbish removal)? • What is the relationship between DELWP and Parks Victoria, particularly in relation to flora and fauna management? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The recovery works on the cottages were completed in 2019, although there is additional restoration required. Parks Victoria is investigating options for these works. - Parks Victoria provides information about visiting the national park through websites, media, social media, visitor information centres, compliance operations, public signage, park rangers and field service officers. Where prohibited park activity occurs, Parks Victoria can apply fines and other actions according to National Park Regulations and other legislation. - Parks Victoria works closely with DELWP and other land managers and agencies to protect the state’s landscapes, flora and fauna. Parks Victoria is responsible for the land it manages, which includes the Grampians National Park. DELWP also manages public land in Victoria’s south-west.
<p>Cultural heritage recognition and management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How and when have Traditional Owners been consulted to identify and assess culturally significant sights throughout the park? • How is cultural significance ascribed? • What kind of entities/sites can be ascribed as significant (rock art sites, scar trees, whole landscapes, intangible significance)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parks Victoria works with Traditional Owners on an ongoing basis to identify and assess cultural significance. This includes walking on Country, conducting cultural heritage assessments with their direction, hearing their stories to learn about the intangible values, and managing any Aboriginal Places registered on the Victorian Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Register with Traditional Owners. - Aboriginal Victoria administers the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006. This law defines Aboriginal cultural heritage and cultural heritage significance. To read more visit Aboriginal Victoria’s website - https://www.aboriginalvictoria.vic.gov.au/ - The Grampians National Park is a national park and National Heritage Listed (Commonwealth Protection). The significance of the Grampians for environmental and cultural heritage protection is enshrined in the legislative requirements of both national recognitions.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are cultural heritage values evaluated against other values such as access for recreation? • What is being done to protect cultural heritage in the park outside of restricting rock climbing? (x3) • What does the process of rediscovering cultural heritage look like? How does it work? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In the National Park, Parks Victoria must firstly prioritise preserving and protecting environmental and cultural values, and then where appropriate, support recreational activities. - Special Protection Areas have been identified in the Grampians National Park since 2003. Activities in these areas are restricted to bushwalking and picnicking. In addition, Parks Victoria and Aboriginal Victoria continually seek to increase awareness of how visitors can avoid damage to environmental and cultural heritage value. - Parks Victoria and Traditional Owners are conducting a notified survey for Aboriginal cultural heritage in known climbing areas by walking on country together, sharing stories and registering rediscovered Aboriginal sites on the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register. This survey is supported by Aboriginal heritage experts from Parks Victoria’s Managing Country Together team.
<p>Rock climbing restrictions in the SPAs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the key messages Parks Victoria are getting from the Traditional Owners in relation to climbing in the Grampians? (x2) • Can you update and be clearer on what specific rock climbing areas you can and cannot climb at? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is the aspiration of Traditional Owners to be appointed as a joint manager of the land and waters throughout the park. This is a significant Aboriginal cultural landscape that contains an abundance of tangible and intangible cultural heritage. <p>Traditional Owner groups have stated that they support restrictions on recreation activities in the park’s Special Protection Areas, and in other locations where activities risk causing harm to cultural or natural values. Parks Victoria has committed to working in partnership with Gariwerd Traditional Owners, through their respective organisations, to develop the new Grampians Landscape Management Plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parks Victoria’s website and maps show rock climbing is not permitted in the park’s Special Protection Areas (SPAs). In these areas, only bushwalking and picnicking are permitted. Rock climbing is permitted outside of these SPAs.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where are the Special Protection Areas? • How were the Special Protection Areas determined? • What is the justification for rock climbing being banned in the SPAs? • Why has rock climbing been picked out as an activity to be banned, when other activities such as walking can have just as much impact? (x5) • What are the major issues that Parks Victoria sees as being comparable to the impacts that brought about the rock climbing bans? Will bushwalkers be excluded from the SPAs? (x2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maps showing the national park's Special Protection Areas are available on Parks Victoria's website - https://www.parks.vic.gov.au/projects/rock-climbing-in-the-grampians-national-park - Special Protection Areas were established in places of high conservation value that are particularly special or at significant risk, such as protected Aboriginal sites, or where there is a threatened species of plant or animal that is vulnerable to human activity. These geographical areas protect specific natural or cultural sites where special management focus is required. - In recent years, rock climbing in the Grampians National Park has increased. Contemporary rock climbing activities, such as bouldering and the use of fixed protection (bolts and chain anchors), have emerged, creating risk to irreplaceable environmental and cultural values. To protect these values, Parks Victoria announced in February 2019 that it would be enforcing the existing restrictions that were created to protect the park's highly sensitive areas called Special Protection Areas. - Rock climbing is one of many recreational activities that is not permitted in the Grampians National Park's Special Protection Areas. In these areas, only bushwalking and picnicking are permitted, and are should occur on formal and legal tracks and trails, and in established picnic areas. - Bushwalking and picnicking are permitted activities within the national park's Special Protection Areas. In terms of rock climbing, damage can occur to rock faces and precious cultural heritage including rock art through use of bolts and chalk, and from the weight of people putting pressure on small ledges causing pieces of rock to break away. There are many examples of vegetation being cleared and trampled on to access

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there has been a noticeable degradation/environmental impact due to activities in the SPAs, how has it been determined what the causes have been? • What impacts from rock climbing are of concern? • Is the current plan of Parks Victoria to reduce the climbing bans in places by assessing where they are not actually needed? • Are there any Parks Victoria employees with a significant climbing background involved in the decision-making process regarding rock climbing? 	<p>climbing sites.</p> <p>Across the park, whether within or outside Special Protection Areas, action may be taken against any person breaking the National Park Regulations. This includes littering, destroying vegetation, driving off defined tracks, damaging park infrastructure including signs and barriers, damaging rock faces, illegally camping and lighting fires, and disobeying or obstructing authorised officers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Damage and impact to crags and rock faces, and surrounding vegetation, has been observed throughout the park. Rock climbing is one of many recreational activities that are not permitted in the Grampians National Park Special Protection Areas. In these areas, only bushwalking and picnicking are permitted activities. - During climbing activities, damage can occur to rock faces and precious cultural heritage including rock art through use of bolts and chalk, and from the weight of people putting pressure on small ledges causing pieces of rock to break away. There are many examples of vegetation being cleared and trampled to access climbing sites. - Parks Victoria is undertaking assessments with Traditional Owners to identify and clarify areas of cultural and environmental significance, and understand the potential impact of activities in those areas. - There are several Parks Victoria staff members who have extensive experience with rock climbing, and their expertise is sought to provide information where appropriate. However, in line with the Victorian Public Service Code of Conduct, people with a significant conflict of interest are removed from decision-making processes. You can read more about managing conflicts of interest here - https://vpsc.vic.gov.au/ethics-behaviours-culture/conflict-of-interest/

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rock climbing has been occurring in the Grampians since before it became a National Park, is 'traditional use' counted in decisions? • What legal procedures must rangers follow when managing activities in the SPAs? • Will Parks Victoria adapt the same commitment to rock climbing in the park as it has with the Grampians Peaks Trail? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As with the many other activities undertaken in the Grampians parks and reserves, rock climbing will be managed according to its potential impact on this protected environment. - Rangers are Authorised Officers (AOs), and are appointed under the Conservation Forests and Lands Act 1987 as well as other legislation including the National Parks Act 1975. The legislation confers various powers on AOs including the power to request name and address, give a direction, (such as leave a park) where a person is offending. A person MUST provide their name and address or follow a lawful direction or risk arrest and other action such as being charged with an offence. When an AO interviews a person suspected of committing an offence he/she must caution the person. The caution is: "I must inform you that you do not have to say or do anything but anything you say or do may be given in evidence. Do you understand that?" - The alignment of the Grampians Peaks Trail has been mapped out in partnership with Traditional Owners and conservation scientists, and complies with all necessary environmental and cultural heritage assessments.
<p>Addressing relationships between stakeholders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When will Parks Victoria issue a public apology for the lies, slander and misinformation they spread about rock climbers? (x6) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - On Thursday 4 April 2019, Parks Victoria published photos onto its website to help communicate the impact and risks to natural and cultural values associated with climbing. One image was not related to climbing impacts and when Parks Victoria was made aware of the mistake, the image was removed. This was a human error. Parks Victoria subsequently sent a letter of explanation and apology to the Victorian Climbing Club and media outlets. Admission of this error was published in multiple media outlets, including The Australian, The Age, ABC and the Herald Sun. <p>Parks Victoria has not wilfully communicated any other inaccurate information.</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will Parks Victoria help mend the relationships between Traditional Owners and rock climbers? (x3) • Why did Parks Victoria vilify climbers while it is clear that they do less damage than tourists? • How can the climbing community trust Parks Victoria, after the recent misinformation about the SPAs being enforced? (x3) • What measures have been put in place to establish a system where Parks Victoria, Traditional Owners and rock climbers discuss concerns and work towards agreed solutions that relate to climbing before they escalate into bans? • How does Parks Victoria intend to improve communication with Traditional Owners and parks users through social media, apps and rangers in the park? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parks Victoria is keen to help all park users, including rock climbers, better understand the Aboriginal cultural history of the landscape, and how they can interact with it in a respectful way. - All activities undertaken in the Grampians National Park result in a degree of damage that needs to be managed. Climbing restrictions in the Special Protection Areas were implemented to manage the increased volume of climbing activity and incidences of damage to the natural and cultural heritage places. - Parks Victoria has not wilfully communicated any inaccurate information, and continues to work with the climbing community through this process and a series of rock climbing roundtable meetings. - The decision for Parks Victoria to implement restrictions on rock climbing in Special Protection Areas of the Grampians National Park followed increasing incidences of bolting and chalking in cultural heritage places, and damage to vegetation near climbing sites. To inform the decision, Parks Victoria held discussions with Traditional Owner groups, Aboriginal Victoria and the Victorian Climbing Club, as a representative group for rock climbers. <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Parks Victoria continues to work with the climbing community in relation to the restrictions within the park. We hope that this management planning process will help to build a clear understanding of how recreation activities, like climbing, should be managed to ensure the national park is protected.</p> - Parks Victoria is keen to help all park users, including rock climbers, better understand the Aboriginal cultural history of the landscape, and how they can interact with it in a respectful way. We hope that this management planning process will help to build a clear understanding of how recreation activities should be managed to ensure the national park

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What can the rock climbing community do to address the concerns about impacts to the satisfaction of land managers and Traditional Owners? And what can we do to contribute to the wellbeing of the park? (x2) • How is Parks Victoria planning to rebuild the previously positive relationship with climbers following the ‘climbing ban scandal’? • How will park users be engaged to provide ongoing support and contribution to ensure growing user groups can be managed effectively, and relationships built between stakeholders? (x2) 	<p>is protected.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As with all park users, rock climbers should follow park rules, signage and regulations for undertaking activities in national parks. - Parks Victoria is keen to help all park users, including rock climbers, better understand the Aboriginal cultural history of the landscape, and how they can interact with it in a respectful way. We hope that this management planning process will help to build a clear understanding of how recreation activities, like climbing, should be managed to ensure the national park is protected. - Parks Victoria recognises that rock climbing is a significant recreational and sporting pursuit with physical, social and economic benefits to communities. We are continuing to work with the climbing community through this process and a series of rock climbing roundtable meetings. - Parks Victoria is consulting with the community throughout the management plan development process, and is keen to hear ideas about how user groups can be managed effectively, and relationships built. Once the plan is developed, Parks Victoria will continue to proactively engage with users of the park through information sharing, meetings and through the Engage Victoria website.
<p>Consultation process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can Parks claim we are at the start of the consultation process, when bans in the SPAs have been implemented many months ago? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Restrictions on activities in Special Protection Areas were implemented to protect special natural and cultural places. Most of these areas were identified in the existing 2003 plan. The Grampians Landscape Management Plan is now being developed in response to rock climbing matters, though the increase in climbing is an example of many for sustainable park management.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why did Parks Victoria not undertake this consultation process before banning climbing from so many cliffs? • How are Traditional Owners involved in the consultation process? (x3) • How will the community input from tonight’s workshop influence the new management plan? • Why has Parks Victoria decided to invite a group called ‘the founding council’ onto the Stakeholder Reference Group and declined ACAV’s request to sit on this group? • Will Parks Victoria strive for transparency, and keep record of and publish the minutes of meetings with the stakeholder reference group and Traditional Owners? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - While climbing has been a prohibited activity in Special Protection Areas since 2003, Parks Victoria acknowledges we have not proactively enforced this and in some cases acted in conflict with the plan. When deciding to proactively enforce the Special Protection Areas in early 2019, we were focussed on our obligations to protect environmental and cultural values. We have heard and acknowledge that the information sharing and engagement on this change in enforcement should have been better, and we strive to do so in the future for any changes about user access and conditions. - Traditional Owner groups are partners in the development of this new management plan, and sit on the review project decision-making body, the Project Control Group. As part of that group, one of their tasks is to review and consider the community feedback. - Alongside other research, this input will be used to shape the draft plan, particularly identifying how we can support sustainable recreation in the park and manage impacts while protecting environmental and cultural sites. - Each main user group has one representative on the Stakeholder Reference Group. For the rock climbing community, the representative was nominated by the groups collaborating to establish a peak body for all rock climbing interests and are signatories to the Founding Council’s Memorandum of Understanding, until a Victorian peak body for rock climbing is established. Parks Victoria accepted the representative nominated by this group. - Meeting notes from the Stakeholder Reference Group are published online. The meeting notes from the first meeting are available on Engage Victoria’s website -https://engage.vic.gov.au/grampians-management-plan. Parks Victoria does not release meeting notes from meetings with Traditional Owner groups or other partner organisations.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What funding (increase) will be dedicated to improving community engagement and provide ongoing education about cultural and environmental protection? (x2) • Will members of the community be invited to write feedback submissions on the Draft Management Plan? (x2) • Will the feedback be reviewed by a panel of community members? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Any changes to how the park is managed in the future will become evident during the 12-month plan development process and then articulated in the final plan. - Yes, everyone will be able to write feedback and submissions on the draft management plan when it is released in the second half of 2020. - Community feedback will be reviewed by the Stakeholder Reference Group which includes user group representatives and community organisations. The engagement summary report will also be made publicly available.
<p>Grampians Peaks Trail (GPT):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the Traditional Owners' position about the construction of the Grampians Peak Trail? • How is creating the GPT consistent with environmental protection of the National Park? (x3) • How was the GPT approved given all the environment and wildlife legislation? What are the compensatory offsets? • How can Parks Victoria justify clearing areas for the GPT, but stop bouldering based on a small amount of vegetation around a few boulders? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Traditional Owner groups have been involved in the development of the Grampians Peaks Trail, including cultural heritage assessments, planning the trail and how Aboriginal stories will be shared. - The alignment of the Grampians Peaks Trail has been mapped out in partnership with Traditional Owners and conservation scientists, and complies with all necessary environmental and cultural heritage assessments. - Parks Victoria is complying with all permits, regulatory approvals and procedures related to the management of native vegetation. Parks Victoria is applying a best practice approach to its on-ground track establishment methodology in how native vegetation loss is being avoided or minimised, and how the vegetation treatment blends in the landscape. - The alignment of the Grampians Peaks Trail has been mapped out in partnership with Traditional Owners and conservation scientists, and complies with all necessary environmental and cultural heritage assessments.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is your response to the claim that the only reason the GPT is being supported is because of the financial benefit? • When can we have an update on the GPT, including an accurate account of the project (financial and construction)? • When will the completed GPT be opened? • What does signature experiences mean? • How did the idea for a signature experience come about? How did we decide it was a product that we need? • How will the Grampians Peaks Trail operate logistically? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Grampians Peaks Trail will become a significant nature-based tourism opportunity and will enhance Victoria’s reputation as a leading nature-based tourism destination in Australia. It will also strengthen the regional Victorian economy through the expansion of the tourism and service industries, with the potential to generate significant economic benefits. - Parks Victoria heard the strong message from the community that they would like to have an update on the GPT. We are currently planning a series of opportunities to share an update online and face-to-face. - The first stage of the GPT is now complete, a three-day/two-night hike starting and finishing in Halls Gap. The remaining sections of the trail will continue to be simultaneously planned for and built up until late 2020, when the full trail is complete. - Signature experiences is a term used for activities, like facilitated walks, that provide special experiences for the user including learning about the Aboriginal history in the region. These experiences exist in parallel with independent walking on the trail. - Signature experiences were outlined in the Grampians Peaks Trail Master Plan. One of the key drivers for developing signature experiences is to increase the accessibility of the trail for different user types. You can read the Master Plan here - https://www.parks.vic.gov.au/-/media/project/pv/main/parks/documents/plans-and-projects/grampians-peaks-trail/grampians-peaks-trail-master-plan.pdf?la=en&hash=8D26F68C44B08680D41414DE362B3B693AA0C42A - How the GPT will operate logistically is still being worked through by Parks Victoria and partners. You can sign up for community updates via the GPT webpage - https://www.parks.vic.gov.au/projects/grampians-peaks-trail.

Question from the community (by theme)	Parks Victoria response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the GPT \$50 per day, per person? • Will Parks Victoria consider removing the requirement to pre-book specific dates for sites on the GPT as this makes walkers unable to adjust their route? (NT's Larapinta Trail manages campsites well). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The current prices for campsites on the first three-day/two-night section of the GPT range from \$13.70 to \$16.80 per site, per night. The pricing for other GPT campsites is still being developed. Campsite pricing will be determined in line with our Fees and Charges Schedule 2019/20-2020/21. The price for signature experiences may be different to campsites for independent hikers. You can read more about fees here - https://www.parks.vic.gov.au/about-us/fees-and-charges. - Campsite booking processes on the GPT is being developed in line with statewide campsite booking policy. We will monitor the booking process as more sections of the trail open and we get feedback from walkers.
<p>Commentary on commercialising the National Park:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does Parks Victoria want to be a profitable enterprise? • Is there a responsibility on Parks Victoria to reach a quota of visitor to the park every year? • Is there a differentiation in the value of different visitors to the Park? It seems you want less climbers but more walkers? • Is there a desire or need to create an income stream from users to the Grampians? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parks Victoria is a not-for-profit government agency that supports sustainable nature-based tourism where it contributes to productive, healthy and prosperous Victorian communities and supports the financial sustainability of the organisation. In the majority of the Victorian parks estate, visitation is compatible with conservation, and is important for inspiring people to help protect Victoria's unique natural and cultural heritage. In some cases, businesses like Licensed Tour Operators do make a profit from their activities within parks. - No. - Recreation activities undertaken in the Grampians parks and reserves are managed according to their potential impact on the environment. - No, though it is important that the cost of providing and managing facilities in parks is covered, for example, through camping fees.

Question from the community (by theme)	Parks Victoria response
	<p>However, Parks Victoria does support sustainable nature-based tourism that contribute to productive, healthy and prosperous local communities. Tourism is a key component of Victoria’s economy, last year contributing an estimated \$26.7 billion in Gross State Product and generating 232,700 jobs. Find out more here - https://djpr.vic.gov.au/priority-industries-sectors/visitor-economy/economic-value-of-tourism.</p>
<p>Visitation to the park:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you know there are 1.3 million visitors to the Grampians National Park? (x2) • What has been the change in visitation over the last 30 years? • Does Halls Gap need two Visitor Information Centres? • The Grampians has had increased visitation for many years, what is Parks Victoria doing to increase the budget for the park to manage this visitation increase? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Based on existing research by Parks Victoria, Visit Victoria and the Grampians Tourism Board, around 1.3 million people visit the national park on any given year. Regular research by Grampians Tourism shows that there is increasing visitation to the region - https://grampianstourism.com.au/research/. - The two information centres have a different focus. Brambuk The National Park and Cultural Centre focuses on the specific park and cultural information and provides cultural experiences. The Halls Gap Visitor Information centre provides some of this information but has a stronger focus on private business and their offers. - The management plan review will consider the increase in visitation and options to manage the impact. The directions out of the management plan will provide the basis for Parks Victoria to develop annual programs of work and budgets.
<p>Additional questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What changes to the management of Djurite/Mt Arapiles are expected in the future? • Are the banksia dying because of the impacts of climate change? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parks Victoria is not currently conducting any reviews into the management of Mount Arapiles-Tooan State Park. - Many factors can contribute to the death of banksias, often in collaboration with each other, making it hard to pin down one specific cause, such as climate change. Causes of mortality can include inappropriate fire regimes (too often or not enough), cinnamon fungus infection, disturbance to the root zone, and prolonged waterlogging or drying of soils. Climate change may exacerbate some of these causes.

Question from the community (by theme)	Parks Victoria response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="253 228 981 323">• Does Parks Victoria have a diminishing funding challenge that will make it harder to manage natural resources in the future?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="1066 228 1989 507">- The management plan review is considering the growing challenges for managing natural resources in the future. The directions out of the management plan will provide the basis for Parks Victoria to develop annual programs of work and budgets. In addition, the government provides funding and policy direction on managing natural resources. The Victorian Government has been increasing funding to preserve and enhance biodiversity across the state. You can read more about this here - https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/biodiversity/biodiversity-plan.