

## STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT OF PUBLIC LAND

Pursuant to section 15 of the *Victorian Environmental Assessment Council Act 2001*, the Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water requests the Victorian Environmental Assessment Council to carry out an investigation into public land in Victoria.

It is more than 25 years since the Land Conservation Council's *Statewide Assessment of Public Land Use* was published and it is timely to consider revisiting aspects of that assessment in order to provide updated information for public land management. National Parks are recognised internationally as the core element of nature conservation and protection. Victoria's protected area estate is significant but remains fragmented and incomplete.

The purpose of the investigation is to carry out a statewide assessment of public land in Victoria which considers the recommendations of the council and its predecessors and the appropriateness of the current system of public land use categories established as a result. The focus of the investigation is to provide information and recommendations to assist management effectiveness and is not intended to change the current levels of protection underpinning Victoria's public land system.

In particular, the council is requested to investigate and provide:

1. an assessment of the current system of public land use categories, including identification and evaluation of approaches adopted in other jurisdictions nationally and internationally, and consideration of options for changing or consolidating the existing categories to result in a system of categories that is simple and clear and that supports effective and efficient public land management;
2. an assessment of the current reservation status of public land, including areas where land use has changed since government accepted a recommendation; and
3. an inventory of the types of values on public land.

The council is requested to provide an interim report on the first term of reference that includes options for the consolidation of the existing public land categories by September 2015. To ensure there is an opportunity for public comment, the council is requested to publish information to assist in the making of submissions on this term of reference in the notice of investigation.

The council must prepare a discussion paper and a draft proposals paper.

The council must report on the completed investigation by February 2017.