

In reply please quote: D2019/062794

13 November 2019

Victorian Environmental Assessment Council
Level 39, 2 Lonsdale St
Melbourne 3000
Victoria, Australia

Attention veac@delwp.vic.gov.au

SUBMISSION TO THE ASSESSMENT OF VICTORIA'S COASTAL RESERVES

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Assessment of Victoria's Coastal reserves draft report. This letter outlines Wannon Water's response and suggested improvements to the report.

Wannon Water is a regional urban water corporation owned by the Victorian State Government and established under the Water Act 1989. Our mission is to provide secure, safe, reliable, and innovative integrated water services to communities in South West Victoria. Our service area extends over 24,500 square kilometres making us the second largest regional urban water corporation in Victoria. The Warrnambool City, Corangamite Shire, Colac Otway Shire, Glenelg Shire, Moyne Shire and Southern Grampians Shire Councils are all within our service area. The services provided by Wannon Water support industry, residential, commercial and rural customers, and a regional population of 100,400 people.

Wannon Water operates key infrastructure in the coastal zone including sewer and water reticulation and water and sewerage treatment plants. Wannon Water is a stakeholder in the protection of catchment water quality, particularly in our water supply catchments servicing communities and business in south-west Victoria. More than half of the population that we service lives within the coastal zone (within 5km of the coastline).

General Comments

Water supply areas require appropriate access for maintenance and other service vehicles and plant transports as required. Ocean outfalls and water quality testing requirements are relevant at Port Fairy, Warrnambool and Portland. Any changes to access or operating constraints may impact the function of Wannon Water to supply water and sewer treatment services for the community.

Difficulty arises at times due to not knowing who the land manager of a particular site is. This is a broader concern than just the coastal reserves, but we believe that land managers and how to identify them should be covered in the report, as they are often the first point of contact when discussing assets and other land management issues.

Wannon Water believes that the report could focus more on fire management within the reserves for the protection of physical assets as well as ecological assets and tourism (safety and aesthetics). Fire in the landscape occurs through both natural and human induced sources and must be incorporated into management plans. Reference to Traditional Owner input to inform fire management on coastal crown land would strengthen the document. Effective fire risk management along the coast can be achieved through controlled burns and other hazard reduction measures which are compatible with other environmental objectives and is essential for the protection of communities and the critical assets that provide services to them. Fire dangers are mentioned in section six, but we believe these aspects could be discussed in more detail in section seven.

Estuary values are at risk due to climate change and this warrants further discussion in Section 7. Specifically, we are considering the Gellibrand, Hopkins, Curdies, Surrey, and other waterways that have significant estuaries along our coast line. There will be a significant impact on the ecology of these systems with a sea level rise of 800mm.

In addition to estuary threats, caravan parks, ovals and roads will be subject to more frequent flooding which could be discussed in this section also. Anglesea is mentioned in 3.2 to assist with this defining coastal reserves, but threats to significant values are vague in detail.

In Section 7 – Coastal inundation, vulnerability maps and acid sulphate soils at risk are shown for Port Philip Bay. Is the mapping available for the rest of the state or has the assessment work not been done? If not done, the gap in knowledge should be acknowledged and a body of work recommended.

Page 85 discusses other trends or emerging uses; Use of coast line to generate energy through harnessing of wave energy, offshore wind turbines and tidal energy opportunities are emerging issues that could be discussed.

Wannon Water Assets within Coastal Reserves

Portland

The Portland Wastewater treatment plant, including a wind turbine and sludge drying pans as well as the Portland bores which service and supply water to the town and industries of the Portland area are valuable assets that are located within a Public Use Zone. This area borders a strip of Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ).



Figure 1: Portland Wastewater plant (left) and water extraction infrastructure at Bald Hill (right).

Port Campbell

Port Campbell bores supply water to the towns of Port Campbell, Timboon and Peterborough. These valuable assets are located within a Public Conservation and Resource Zone (PCRZ).



Figure 2: The Port Campbell bore for water extraction and water treatment facility is shown within the pink circle.

Warrnambool

The Warrnambool Wastewater treatment plant which is currently undergoing an expansion to deal with increasing industrial and residential growth. The plant is also upgrading its screening assets to ensure best practice. The facility is on land that is bordering both PCRZ and PPR zones.



Figure 3: Warrnambool wastewater treatment plant.

Port Fairy

Port Fairy has wastewater ocean discharge infrastructure through a PPR zone. Any rise in sea level would mean possible inundation and upgrades to infrastructure.



Figure 4: Port Fairy Ocean outfall area.

Yours sincerely



Peter Wilson
Branch Manager Asset Planning

