The Hon Lily D’Ambrosio MP

Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change

Monday, 27 May 2019

NEW PARKS FOR FAMILIES TO ENJOY THE GREAT OUTDOORS

The Andrews Labor Government is creating thousands of hectares of new parkland across Melbourne, making it easier for Victorians to get out and enjoy the great outdoors, and protecting our state’s unique wilderness.

The *Victorian Budget 2019/20* invests $154 million in the *Suburban Parks Program,* delivering a key election commitment that will create 6,500 hectares – or the equivalent of more than 170 Royal Botanic Gardens – of new parkland in the suburbs that need them the most.

This unprecedented investment will turn Victoria into the parks capital of Australia, giving families great places to relax, unwind and spend time with their loved ones.

As promised, the Labor Government is also making it easier for Victorians to enjoy the great outdoors with $107.2 million to build new campgrounds, upgrade facilities and tracks, and make family holidays more affordable.

We’ve already made it cheaper to camp by removing camping fees at 500 basic sites over 70 campgrounds in 19 parks across regional Victoria, now we’ll go even further halving all remaining fees in State and National Parks.

This will not only help hardworking families to take a break, it also supports jobs and our regional communities, keeping tourist attractions and local cafes full.

Some of Victoria’s most loved attractions will benefit from a Budget boost, with $5 million for upgrades to botanic gardens across Victoria and $3 million for the continuation of Zoos Victoria’s *Kids Free* policy.

The Budget is also investing in our pristine natural environment with $3 million to tackle the impacts of climate change along coastlines, supporting Coastcare volunteers and providing grants to local communities.

The Environment Protection Authority will receive $15 million to strengthen compliance, support the delivery of accurate and timely information, and better respond to pollution and emergency incidents.

The Labor Government is also building bushfire resilience across Victoria, with $43.3 million to continue delivering the *Safer Together* program and a digital radio transition program, replacing the outdated analogue system for emergency services.

The Budget delivers $35 million to strengthen and diversify Victoria’s waste and recycling industry – including establishing contract models, promoting and developing new markets, and ensuring strong regulatory oversight.

**Quotes attributable to Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D’Ambrosio**

“We promised to build thousands of hectares of new parkland to make sure that, no matter where you live, families have green, open space to enjoy – and that’s exactly what we’re delivering.”

“Our major investment in camping will not only make it easier to enjoy our beautiful bushland, it will keep local shops, cafes and tourist attractions busy – supporting jobs and regional communities.”

“We’re continuing to invest in a stronger, more effective environmental regulator to protect everything that make our state special.”