

# Community Resilience Newsletter

## Wye River Fire

COMMUNITY  
RESILIENCE

WYE RIVER | SEPARATION CREEK

19 JULY 2016

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

### Reducing risks in the landscape

Colac-Otway Shire, Emergency Management Victoria and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning are continuing to work to reduce the risks of landslip in Wye River and Separation Creek.

Coryule Road has been closed to public access following a minor landslip at 1 Coryule Road on Wednesday 13 July. Parts of Karingal Drive were closed as rain affected the road and repairs were needed.

The site of the landslip had been classified as Very High Risk <http://wyeseconnect.info/reducing-risks-landscape/> and was being closely monitored, especially in light of the recent rainfall events.

Large water barriers have been installed along Coryule Road to help reduce the risk to surrounding properties if any further soil moves occur.

To reduce the long-term landslip risk a full assessment on the integrity of the site is occurring to help guide the installation of retaining walls.

This minor landslip indicates the high level of soil saturation on the fire-affected landscape and highlights the importance of the immediate drainage clearance works being undertaken by the Shire <http://wyeseconnect.info/reducing-risks-landscape/>.

Anyone living in or visiting Wye River and Separation Creek may also notice an increased presence of Victoria Police Officers conducting ground patrols. Victoria Police are undertaking patrols for general public safety and to observe the local environment and conditions as part of the Emergency Management Team.

Geotechnical expert Tony Miner is providing advice to the Police on priority monitoring areas and the changes or structural anomalies that may indicate an increased risk of landslips.

Affected residents are being contacted directly.

Meanwhile, Colac Otway Shire staff, supported by crews from DELWP, continue to work to clear drains in the area.

### Wye River Community Meeting Date Change

The date of this month's Community Meeting in Wye River has changed to coincide with other local community initiatives and reduce the amount of travel required to participate in local meetings and events during July.

The Wye River Community Meeting will now be held on Sunday 31 July between 10.30am and midday at the Wye River Surf Life Saving Club. The Community Meeting will be held the day after the Wye River CFA's Christmas in July celebration lunch at the Wye Beach Hotel.

The Community Meeting in Melbourne will be held as scheduled on Thursday 28 July from 5.30pm at Richmond Town Hall.

### What's On in July

#### Christmas in July Community Lunch

Saturday 30 July, 12pm (BOOKED OUT)

#### Community Meetings

Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> July, 5.30pm-7pm

Meeting Room 3, Richmond Town Hall

Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> July, 10:30am – 12 midday

Community Catch-up lunch to follow

Wye River Surf Life Saving Club

#### Replanting Paddy's Path Working Bee

Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> July, 1pm

Meet at Wye River CFA

#### Community Resilience Committee

Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> July, 1pm – 3pm

Wye River Surf Life Saving Club

## Replanting Paddy's Path

A working bee is planned for Sunday 31 July to help local members of the Wye-to-Wongarra Landcare Group establish 1000 indigenous plants along Paddy's Path before the optimal planting season ends next month.

Everyone is welcome, even if you can only give half an hour of your time.

Volunteers will meet in front of the Fire Station at 1pm. Planting will finish no later than 3pm.

Please wear sturdy footwear, eye protection (eg sunglasses) and gardening gloves.

Please contact Yvonne Sheppard on 0407 883 116 or oldshep2@bigpond if you have any queries or require further information.

## Spirit Foundation Thanks

Emergency Management Commissioner Craig Lapsley has issued a personal thanks to the Spirit Foundation in recognition of the work they have done in the Wye River and Separation Creek Communities.

*I would like to congratulate the Spirit Foundation and the Wye River and Separation Creek Bushfire Recovery Committee for their work in distributing much needed funds to the communities of Wye River and Separation Creek.*

*It is fantastic to see the support and fundraising activities undertaken by the coastal communities along the Great Ocean Road and across Victoria. So far \$350,000 has been distributed to community members impacted by the fire.*

*A special mention goes to the Recovery Committee for their work in identifying community members most in need and advising the Spirit Foundation of the best way to utilize the funds.*

**- Craig Lapsley, Emergency Management Commissioner**

## Community firewood

The Wye River and Separation Creek community are now able to access split firewood and mulch, obtained from fire affected trees that needed to be removed due to safety concerns.

Community members are coordinating the distribution of wood on an as needs basis.

Those wishing to access the wood will need to organise transporting it from the community wood pile in Dot's Paddock on Sarsfield Street (near the end of Stanway Drive) in Separation Creek.

For more information call Peter Jacobs on 5289 0462. Please leave your name, local address and phone number if your call is not answered.

## Community thanks Grocon for their efforts

The Sporting and Social Club of Wye River, Separation Creek and Kennett River brought the community together in late June to personally thank the Grocon clean-up crew with a BBQ lunch at Harrington Park.

The wintery weather did not deter people from turning up to show their appreciation and spend time with Grocon staff, workers and sub-contractors and to celebrate the work completed to-date.

Community members presented Rob Galle and Brian McAdam from Grocon with a plaque in appreciation of the team's clean-up efforts.

## Christmas in July discounted accommodation

The Wye River Big 4 and Wye Beach Hotel are offering discounted accommodation to community members attending the Christmas in July celebration on Saturday 30 July.

Deals include a 20 percent discount on one night's accommodation or stay two nights for the price of one at Wye River Big 4. Wye Beach Hotel is offering 20 percent discount on one night's accommodation.

To book accommodation, contact the Big 4 on 5289 0241 or the Wye Beach Hotel on 5289 0240.

## Tiny Street Library

Those visiting or living in Wye River and Separation Creek are encouraged to look out for a unique community project, driven by members of the Wye/Sep Book Group and funded by Colac-Otway Shire

Street Libraries are a beautiful home for books, planted in the front yard of a house. They are accessible from the street, and are an invitation to share the joys of reading with your neighbours.

If anyone has a book or two that they think others would enjoy, they can just pop it into a Street Library box.

The Street Libraries are maintained by the members of the Book Group, who have already compiled a large number of books thanks to donations and support from local business and community groups.

The locations of the libraries – one in Wye River and one in Separation Creek – will be determined in consultation with residents and the community and a community launch will be announced in the coming months.

Want to get involved? Contact Sibylle Noras on [sibyllenoras@yahoo.com.au](mailto:sibyllenoras@yahoo.com.au) or 0408 971 109.

### **Bird and marsupial nest boxes**

Residents of Wye River and Separation Creek will soon be able to provide much-needed homes for furry and feathered friends.

An initiative emerging from the Weeds and Birds Workshop on Sunday 12 June, the Lorne Men's Shed will build the bird boxes and local children will be invited to paint them before installation.

Colac-Otway Shire has provided funds to buy the materials, and further funding from other agencies is being sought for installation.

The boxes need to be installed by qualified arborists high up in the trees to attract and be suitable for their anticipated inhabitants. As part of the project, arborists will also create artificial hollows as alternative habitat accommodation in other suitable trees.

The nest boxes are available at no cost and community members can order from a selection of boxes suitable for King Parrots, Rosellas, Kookaburras, Pardalotes, Micro-bats, Sugar-Gliders and Possums. It is not necessary to state a preference – the local wildlife will decide if they take up residence in the box.

To order a nest box for your property, contact Yvonne Sheppard via 0407 883 116 or [oldshep2@bigpond.com](mailto:oldshep2@bigpond.com) and provide your name, phone and email address, property address and preferred species type of habitat box. Property owners will be contacted when installations commence.

This project is supported by members of the Wye-to-Wongarra Landcare Group, in association with Colac-Otway Shire, Southern Otway Landcare Network and Lorne Community Hospital.

### **Amy's Gran Fondo**

The annual [Amy's Gran Fondo](#) event will be held on Sunday 11 September giving cyclists a once-a-year opportunity to experience the thrill of cycling safely along the Great Ocean Road. In 2016 the course direction has been reversed with the 120km Wiggle Amy's Gran Fondo starting in Lorne, taking riders through the Otway Ranges, along a breathtaking stretch of the Great Ocean Road, before finishing on the main street in Lorne. The 45km Amy's Medio Fondo will start in Apollo Bay and finish in Lorne. For all the event details including road closures and community meetings go to <http://www.colacotway.vic.gov.au/Upcoming-Events/2016-Wiggle-Amys-Gran-Fondo>

### **Jack Crane Memorial Seat Unveiling**

The Jack Crane Memorial Seat will be unveiled at Wye Fire Station at 11.30am on Saturday 30 July.

Jack was not only a long-serving member and secretary of the fire brigade but he also served on every other committee in Wye.

All are welcome to attend.

### **Community projects to build resilience**

The Community Resilience Committee (CRC) Community Connection and Wellbeing Work Group is seeking ideas and feedback from the community for activities and projects that will help build community resilience into the future.

Some of the suggestions currently under consideration include:

- A Memorial Arts Project – involving the commissioning of a sculpture to represent “Destruction and Survival”. Items salvaged from destroyed houses will form the backbone of the artwork, which is a symbol of the community's recovery and a tangible memorial. The concept would be supported by a background story accompanying each item, as well as a photo of the owner with the donated piece
- Community Art Workshops
- Community volunteers training opportunities
- Promotion of the great work being done in town – an opportunity to submit stories about community members and their contribution to the community

- A Story Board – to illustrate the journey from before the fires and progress to date.
- Photo/Art Exhibition – to be held over summer to showcase community photos and art relating to both the fires and life in the community
- A Historical Society Book Project
- Children writing postcards to people who have lost or damaged homes
- Community Play
- Literary Therapy

The CRC Community Connection and Wellbeing Work Group would love to hear what you think about the above suggestions and any ideas that you have.

Please email [bushfire.recovery@colac.otway.vic.gov.au](mailto:bushfire.recovery@colac.otway.vic.gov.au) with your ideas.

### **Water tank proposal for Harrington Park**

Following the Christmas Day bushfire, the Lions Club of Lorne has kindly donated a water tank to the Wye River and Separation Creek community.

It is proposed that the 19,000 litre water tank will be placed in Harrington Park.

Two alternate tank locations have been proposed to take into account the views of different members of the community. The proposed locations should not adversely impact on the amenity of the road and adjoining land, and would not prejudice the future use and development of the reserve. There is no intention to install public toilets in Harrington Park.

The tank is proposed as an alternate water supply for the community in case of a future bushfire event or other circumstance where water may be needed by the community. It is intended to achieve greater resilience for the community and could also supply water to the community garden within Harrington Park.

Council is seeking feedback from the community on this proposal, and will take any comments into account before authorising the works to occur.

Detailed maps and photos of the proposed locations will be available on [www.wyeseconnect.com.au](http://www.wyeseconnect.com.au). Feedback can also be provided through the website or by contacting the Bushfire Recovery Information Centre on 5232 9400 or e-mail [bushfire.recovery@colacotway.vic.gov.au](mailto:bushfire.recovery@colacotway.vic.gov.au) no later than **Wednesday 27 July 2016**.

### **APZ Cluster Meetings well attended**

Organisers are pleased with the community attendance at cluster meetings held during early July to consider the pros and cons of different Asset Protection models to manage vegetation bordering the settlement.

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning held seven meetings across eight cluster areas. The meetings were attended by 51 community members, who participated in detailed, cluster-specific discussions and voted on their preferred options.

Discussions were informed by the advice of topic experts covering BAL ratings, bushfire risk and preparation, strategic fire planning, town planning, geotechnics, waste water, bunkers, biodiversity, amenity impacts and more.

An online survey will be launched this weekend for all community members to further comment on APZ options. The survey will be available at [www.wyeseconnect.com.au](http://www.wyeseconnect.com.au) until early August

The results of the Cluster meetings and survey will be presented to the community at two Open House events before a decision is made.

More information will be available on [www.wyeseconnect.com.au](http://www.wyeseconnect.com.au) in coming days.

### **Local Community Member presents at conference**

Christine Shaw recently presented to the 16<sup>th</sup> annual Emergency Management Conference held in Melbourne in early July.

The conference was attended by CEOs, senior managers, operational managers, security personnel and emergency managers from State and Local Government and across the Emergency Management sector.

Christine, who is on the Wye River CFA Auxillary and a member of the CRC Community Connection and Wellbeing Work Group, spoke during a session devoted to the learnings from the Wye River and Separation Creek fires about the community volunteer model applied in the immediate aftermath of the fires.

### **6x6 Design Exhibition Melbourne**

For those unable to attend the 6x6 Design Exhibition held in Melbourne, the exhibition will be filmed and the footage from the various architects will be available on the WyeSepConnect Facebook page and at [www.wyeseconnect.com.au](http://www.wyeseconnect.com.au).