



# PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH PAINKALAC CREEK WETLAND TRAIL

The Great Ocean Road Coast Committee invites interested persons to comment on a proposal to establish the Painkalac Creek Wetland Trail.

The trail would provide a unique estuarine wetland trail experience while preserving the environmental values of the Painkalac Estuary. The site is on the Lorne side of the bridge over the Painkalac Creek at Aireys Inlet / Fairhaven.



The design includes:

- A walking trail to link the Fairhaven Surf Life Saving Club and Aireys Inlet shopping precinct to improve pedestrian safety, and provide all ability access
- A timber boardwalk and birdhide to provide views of the wetlands whilst protecting important bird habitat
- Formalising and improving the existing car parking area
- A small fishing / canoe platform adjacent to the bridge
- An elevated timber viewing platform with all ability access
- Weed control, including removal of blackberries
- Revegetation with indigenous species

Written submissions regarding the proposal can be sent to GORCC, PO Box 53, Torquay 3228 by 14<sup>th</sup> April 2006.

David Clarke  
Executive Officer  
Great Ocean Road Coast Committee [www.gorcc.com.au](http://www.gorcc.com.au)



5 April 2006

Mr David Clarke  
Executive Officer  
Great Ocean Road Coast Committee  
PO Box 53  
TORQUAY Vic 3228

COPY

Dear David

As residents of Fairhaven, we are strongly in favour of GORCC's proposal to establish The Painkalac Wetland Trail, and we appreciate the opportunity to comment on the proposal.

Before writing we have reconnoitred the trail to the best of our ability, but feel that an on-site inspection with GORCC members or staff could enable better interpretation of some of the proposed features of the design and help pinpoint more precisely the position of some of those features.

We are pleased to see the importance given to the preservation of the environmental values of the Painkalac Estuary in providing a wetland trail experience, and assume that the proposal is being considered within the framework of the Painkalac Estuary Management Plan.

We support the proposal to remove environmental weeds and replace them with indigenous species. However the weed species are much more numerous than just the blackberries specified in the proposal. The section between the Painkalac bridge and the stand pipe is a frequent crossing point of the Great Ocean Road for Rufous Bristlebirds and the weed removal and revegetation with indigenous species to take place there should be selective, and if practical, it should for preference be gradual, to avoid the sudden destruction of understorey cover for this species.

We welcome the formalisation and improvement of the existing carpark and assume that this also implies the closure of the existing and most inappropriately sited informal public dumpsite.

We have specific comments on some aspects of the design:

**Fishing/canoe platform:** We suggest that a more appropriate site for a fishing platform is adjacent to the existing asphalted car park on the north side of the bridge. This is already a popular fishing spot and the bank is showing signs of serious degradation at that point. A fishing platform there would have the advantage of simultaneously providing safe access and protecting the bank and its riparian vegetation from further degradation. We feel that a canoe-launching platform is not required in this part of the creek. There is already a very large informal canoe launching site on River Reserve Road that has more suitable vehicular access than the proposed site on the south-west side of the bridge. That site too would benefit from appropriately constructed and sited infrastructure although we realise that is outside the terms of reference of the current proposal.

**Bird hide:** While recognising that our walk around the area yesterday was undertaken following one of the driest periods in recent years, and when the environmental flow from the Painkalac Dam is non-existent, we feel that even during times of more abundant rainfall, the bird hide will be situated a long way from the water and mudflats. Binoculars and probably even a bird-spotting telescope would be necessary to identify most species.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on this proposal.

Sincerely

Ros and Tim Gibson