



Environmental **Volunteer** GUIDELINES



Acknowledgments:

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Message from Council

Yarra Ranges has a large and active community of volunteers who are dedicated to preserving our beautiful natural environment. These people are extremely important to the Yarra Ranges community, and we are committed to supporting them and making sure they are safe while they volunteer.

We understand that being part of an environmental volunteer group can also bring a range of benefits to volunteers. For example:

- Learning more about the environment
- Developing a sense of community and belonging
- Strengthening community partnerships
- Making like-minded friends
- Having lots of fun

To support our volunteers, we have developed a range of useful information to help environmental volunteer groups continue their tireless work in the best and safest way possible. The information is designed to cover a range of important topics including how we can support groups, the roles and responsibilities of group members, and essential information regarding Occupational Health and Safety.

The Yarra Ranges community is lucky enough to have more than 75 environmental volunteer groups throughout the region, and we recognise their importance in helping to sustain our natural environment.

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Environmental Volunteers in the Yarra Ranges

An environmental volunteer group is a group of people who work together to conserve native plants or animals, reserves, parklands, bushlands, trails, roadsides and waterways on public or private land.

Environmental volunteer groups in the region of Yarra Ranges undertake a number of different activities depending on the group's interest and the site location. Activities may include the following:

- Revegetation projects
- Site maintenance
- Habitat restoration
- Flora and fauna monitoring
- Seed collection and plant propagation
- Water monitoring
- Special environment events and festivals for days such as Clean up Australia Day and World Environment Day
- Weeding and weed mapping
- Mulching and jute matting
- Management planning with guidance from Council
- Trail maintenance
- Environmental advocacy
- Attending training sessions conducted by Yarra Ranges Council

Joining an environment group

Joining a group is a wonderful opportunity to network and connect with your local community. To find out about groups in your area contact the Environmental Volunteer Support Officer (EVS0) on 1300 368 333. If you find there is no relevant group or you have a specific site in mind, you might consider starting your own.

Starting an environment group

To start a group, all you need to do is get together with like-minded people, consider the information provided within these Environment Volunteer Guidelines, gather the required information outlined below and contact Council. Information you will need on hand when initially contacting council is as follows:

- Outline why you wish to form a community group and what you hope to accomplish
- On a map, define the area you wish to work in
- Explore community interest from existing groups in the area (e.g. local residents, schools, social groups, scouts)
- Determine the support for your group, who you would like to get involved, how many people have registered interest
- List the types of activities you would like to undertake
- Think about when your group would want to undertake activities and for how long

The Environmental Volunteer Support Officer can help ascertain likely interest in the area by organising mail-outs and helping with flyer's to initiate activities.

Council's Parks & Bushland Department currently support more than 75 groups across the region.

Note: No matter where you are working, whether on public or private property, you must get permission from the landholder before the works commence.

What is Landcare?

Landcare is a community driven movement to enable volunteers to care for the land, with support from government.

- Landcare groups typically form around a defined geographical location (can also be issue based) with members collaborating to undertake local on-ground action and the sharing of information.
- Projects are typically done on privately owned land (but not exclusively).
- Landcare Networks and groups partner with government agencies to deliver these projects. A list of these agencies is provided below.

Landcare in the Yarra Ranges

There are 14+ Landcare groups in the Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges.

Groups form Landcare Networks (run by volunteers), to give a central point of contact for support and information and can gain state government funding for paid landcare facilitators.

The diverse land use and high environmental values in the Yarra Ranges gives rise to a multitude of land management issues.

Landcare Groups in the Yarra Ranges undertake a range of work to care for the land including:

- Protection and restoration of local waterways (e.g. Yarra, Woori Yallock, Cockatoo, Monbulk Creeks).
- Protection of endangered species: (e.g. helmeted honeyeater, emerald star bush).
- Educating and informing horse and lifestyle property owners on sustainable land management practices.
- Working with schools, corporate groups and the general community to raise awareness of the local environment through festivals, workshops, planting activities, field trips, working bees & markets.
- Engaging landowners in pest plant (e.g. blackberry, ragwort) and animal programs (e.g. deer, rabbits).

The Parks & Bushland Department is responsible for supporting environmental volunteers to achieve and protect the biodiversity values and ecological integrity of the region. Within the Parks & Bushland Department lies the Bushland Team which supports environmental volunteer groups with their on-ground works. This team looks after our Council managed roadsides, trails and reserves – the places where many of our groups work.

"The keystones of Landcare are that it is community owned and driven, it encourages integrated management of environmental assets with productive farmland, and it promotes a more sustainable approach to private land management". Landcare Australia

Council provides ongoing support for environmental volunteer groups. Administrative assistance is available with mail-outs, flyer's and distribution of newsletters. Requests can be made for the loan of tools, marquees, tea/coffee kits and more.

Benefits of joining Landcare

- Learn skills in sustainable land management.
- Meet locals with a similar concern.
- Improve local farm productivity and protect the natural environment.
- Improve your physical and social wellbeing.
- Access Group Insurance, training, conferences & a support framework.

Landcare information & resources

Landcare gateway
landcarevic.org.au

Landcare Partners & Contacts
(These Agencies provide advice and grant opportunities)

Department of Land, Water & Planning
www2.delwp.vic.gov.au

Yarra Ranges Council
yarraranges.vic.gov.au

Port Phillip & Westernport CMA
ppwcma.vic.gov.au

Melbourne Water
melbournewater.com.au

Northern Yarra & Yarra Ranges Landcare Facilitator

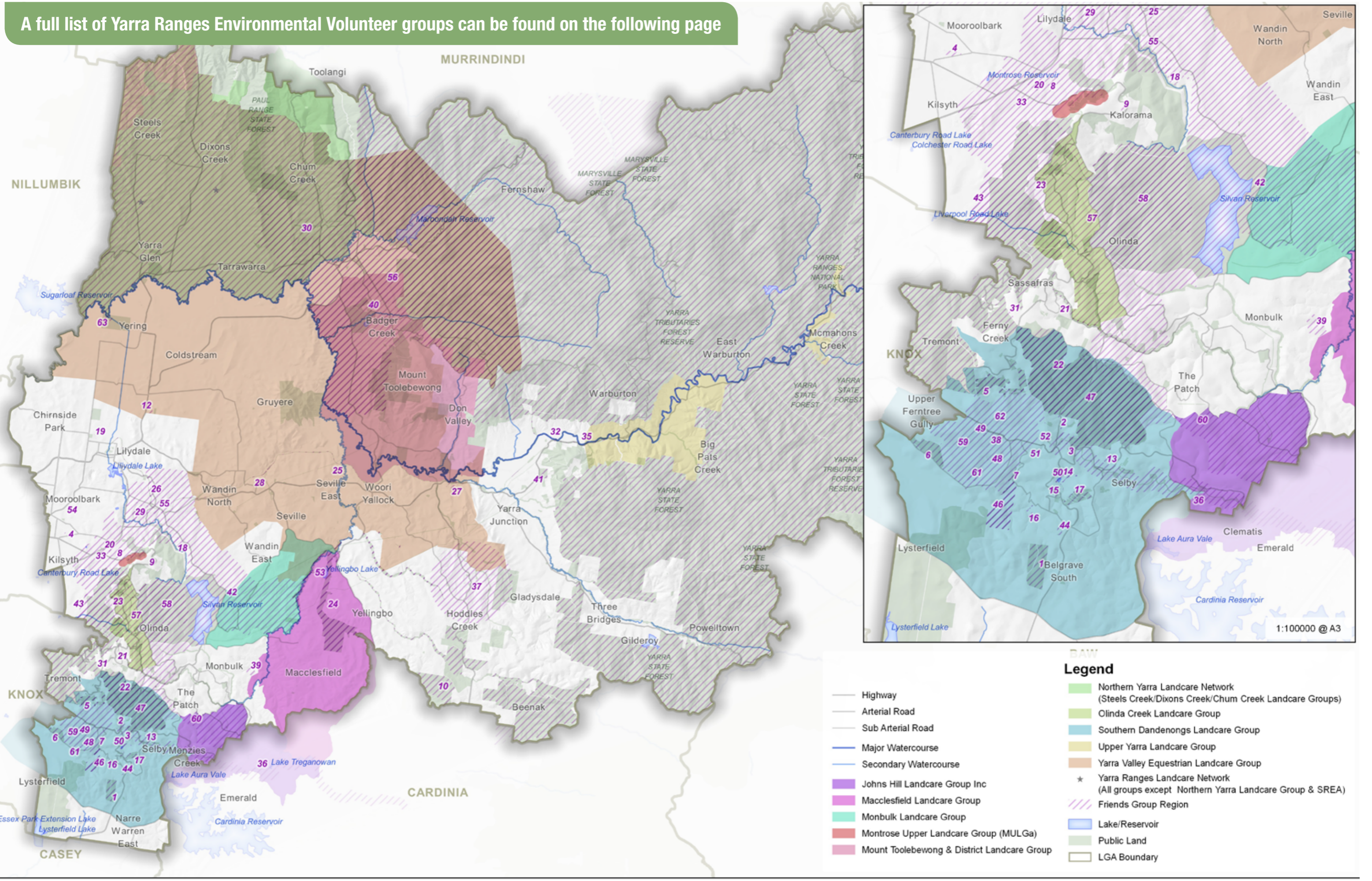
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A full list of Yarra Ranges Environmental Volunteer groups can be found on the following page



YARRA RANGES COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENTAL VOLUNTEER GROUPS

Map scale: 1:200000 @ A3
Map last updated: 12 Aug 2019
Datum: GDA94 MGA Zone 55
Job reference: REQ0010433



Map ID	Group	Area
1	Friends of Baluk Willam Flora Reserve	Belgrave Sth
2	Friends of Clematis Creek	Belgrave
3	Friends of Monbulk Creek – Trestle Bridge (SDLG)	Selby
4	Friends of Elizabeth Bridge Reserve	Kilsyth
5	Friends of Ferny Creek	Ferny Creek
6	Friends of Glenfern Valley Bushlands Inc	Upwey
7	Friends of Hazelvale Valley	Belgrave Heights
8	Friends of Heathfield Creek Reserve	Montrose
9	Friends of Karwarra Garden	Kalorama
10	Friends of Kurth Kiln	Gembrook
11	Friends of Leadbeater's Possum Inc.	Healesville
12	Friends of Margaret Lewis Reserve	Coldstream
13	Friends of Minak Reserve	Selby
14	Friends of Monbulk Creek – Belgrave Lake Group (SDLG)	Belgrave
15	Friends of Monbulk Creek – Colby Drive Reserve	Belgrave
16	Friends of Monbulk Creek – German Gully Group (SDLG)	Belgrave Heights
17	Friends of Monbulk Creek – Selby Conservation Reserve (SDLG)	Selby
18	Friends of Mount Evelyn Aqueduct Inc	Mount Evelyn
19	Friends of Old Pound Reserve	Lilydale
20	Friends of Richards Reserve	Montrose
21	Friends of Sassafras Creek	Sassafras
22	Friends of Sherbrooke Forest Inc	Sherbrooke
23	Singleton Reserve Friends Group	Mount Dandenong
24	Friends of the Helmeted Honeyeater	Yellingbo
25	Friends of Lilydale to Warburton Trail/Community Economic Development Association	Upper Yarra
26	Friends of Owl Lands (Mt Evelyn Protection & Progress Association)	Mount Evelyn
27	Friends of Wanderslore	Launching Place
28	Friends of Wandin Yallock Creek	Seville
29	Friends of Water Race & Quinn Reserve Inc	Mount Evelyn
30	Healesville Environment Watch Inc (HEWI)	Healesville
31	Friends of Holly Hill	Ferny Creek
32	Millgrove Resident Action Group	Millgrove

Map ID	Group	Area
33	Montrose Environment Group Inc	Montrose
34	Southern Dandenongs Community Indigenous Plant Nursery Inc	Belgrave Heights
35	Upper Yarra River Reserves Committee of Management	Warburton
36	Southern Ranges Environment Alliance (SREA)	Dandenong Ranges
37	Friends of Hoddles Creek	Hoddles Creek
38	Tecoma Community Garden	Tecoma
39	Friends of Wards Reserve	Monbulk
40	Friends of Badger Creek School	Badger Creek
41	Yarra Valley ECOSS	Wesburn
42	WAGS - Wabbit Action Group Silvan	Wandin/ Silvan
43	Lilydale Bowman's Club	Lilydale
44	Friends of Belgrave South Recreation Reserve (SDLC)	Belgrave South
45	Friends of Birdsland	Belgrave Heights
46	Birdsland Bees	Belgrave Heights
47	Stoppitt (Pittosporum)	Dandenong Ranges
48	Friends of Thompson Road	Upwey
49	Upwey Township Group	Upwey
50	Belgrave Platypus Group	Belgrave
51	Friends of Belgrave Rail Trail	Belgrave
52	Friends of Wattle Avenue	Belgrave
53	HeHo's Nursery	Yellingbo
54	Candlebark Nursery	Mooroolbark
55	Mount Evelyn Environment Protection & Progress Association (MEEPPA)	Mount Evelyn
56	My Environment	Healesville
57	Olinda Action Group Inc.	Olinda
58	Kalowerama Community Fireguard Group	Kalorama
59	Roma Reserve Residents Advisory Committee	Upwey
60	Save the Dandenongs League	Kallista
61	Friends of Upwey South Recreation Reserve	Upwey
62	Friends of The Sanctuary	Upwey
63	Friends of Spadonis Reserve	Yarra Glen
64	Friends of the Corner	Selby

Council Support for Environmental Volunteer Groups

The Parks and Bushland Department is responsible for supporting environmental volunteers to achieve and protect the biodiversity values and ecological integrity of the region. Within the Parks and Bushland Department lies the Bushland Team which supports environmental volunteer groups with their on-ground works. This team looks after our Council managed roadsides, trails and reserves – the places where many of our groups work.

Council provides ongoing support for environmental volunteer groups. Administrative assistance is available with mail-outs, flyer's and distribution of newsletters. Requests can be made for the loan of tools, marquees, tea/coffee kits and more.

Parks & Bushland Department

The Parks & Bushland Department aims to actively:

- Support Yarra Ranges wonderful volunteers
- Raise community awareness of environmental values
- Foster environmental stewardship and encourage appreciation and enjoyment of the natural environment
- Promote best ecological practice within Council and the community
- Provide advice to environmental volunteer groups, Council departments, internal and external committees and agencies
- Provide regular updates, communicate important information and promote group events
- Identify training opportunities for volunteers
- Promote upcoming grant opportunities identified by council internal departments





The Bushland Team

There are a number of Bushland Management Officers in the Bushland Team. Each manages a region of the municipality and can assist environmental volunteers with the following:

- Developing Agreed Work Plans
- Provide technical guidance, advice and support to groups
- Provide tools and materials to be used for environmental improvement works
- Liaise with external grant funded contractors to ensure consistency in on-ground works

The Environment Volunteer Support Officer

There is an Environment Volunteer Support Officer working within the Parks & Bushland team who supports the Bushland Management Officers and the 65+ environmental volunteer groups across Yarra Ranges. The Environment Volunteer Support Officer can assist volunteers with the following:

- Developing Declared Activity Lists
- Assist in applying for council insurance cover
- Provide guidance, advice and support to groups
- Assist with equipment booking (e.g. marquees, tables and brochure stands)
- Provide training opportunities to volunteers
- Provide administrative support in printing and distribution of groups newsletters and mail-outs
- Advocating for grant opportunities
- Facilitating networking event semi-annually

Agreed Works Plan

An Agreed Works Plan is designed to help you, Council and contractors plan and manage Council land together. An Agreed Works Plan is developed with the Bushland Team so that projects can be documented and followed. Not all groups require an Agreed Works Plan but all groups will need to provide council with an activity list. The Agreed Works Plan is designed for groups undertaking large projects or working across multiple land managers. An Agreed Works Plan can be requested by all groups, with approval at the discretion of the Bushland Management Officer.

This Plan identifies your groups management goals, plans the next 12-24 months of work and identifies any community events you would like to run or be apart of. This then enables Council to identify group needs and the risk level of the activities you intend to perform, and follow up with alternative methods, training and Council support where required.

Declared Activity List

The Declared Activity List is designed to help you, council and - when relevant - the insurers, to understand what activities the environmental volunteer group will be undertaking as a part of their environmental improvement works. This is a comprehensive list of activities that the environmental volunteer group and council have agreed upon. In the event that the group intends to undertake any activity not specified in the Declared Activity List or Agreed Works Plan please contact the Environment Volunteer Support Officer on 1300 368 333 as soon as the activity is identified. The volunteer group is responsible for declaring all activities. Groups with council insurance will not be covered from any activities undertaken that have not been declared. If declaring a new activity, ample notice must be given to allow time to seek approval from the insurance provider.

Best Practice for Volunteer Groups



Group Leadership and Governance

Group leadership is essential to the effective running of an environmental volunteer group and is crucial to make sure volunteers remain safe. Some groups have a very basic structure while others are more complex depending on the needs of the group. A group may elect to become incorporated or remain unincorporated. Regardless of the governance structure, it is important to ensure you have appointed some form of leadership or committee that is able to make strategic decisions for the group, be the main point of contact and deal with any issues that arise.

Each group will need to be able to provide a vision that sets out your group's purpose and goals. This will be the basis for all future activities, and will also be needed when dealing with any disagreements about the group's direction and activities. Those acting in group leadership are accountable for all activities of the group, including finances. As part of remaining accountable, it's important that you keep good records, including copies of all your forms, transactions and other information so that if an incident occurs or questions are raised, you are covered and have the documentation to support you and your group.





Group structure

The best way to determine leadership and appoint a committee to ensure proper governance is to hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM) in which volunteers can be elected for positions. Although a committee is not required it is seen as a good practice. If you elect not to have a committee, you will still need to designate a leader that will be the primary point of contact for the group.

If this sounds overwhelming be assured that all groups begin this way and Council are here to help. For assistance please contact the Environmental Volunteer Support Officer on 1300 368 333.

Committee positions may include:

The **President** - ultimately responsible for overseeing and ensuring the smooth operation of the group. The president is usually the person who:

- Is the spokesperson and contact person for the group
- Provides leadership
- Oversees the day-to-day running of the group
- Ensures that the group members are aware of OH&S and other safety requirements

The **Chairperson** - responsible for managing the smooth running of committee meetings. The President can also act as Chairperson.

The **Secretary** - deals with many things and acts as a support to the President. The Secretary:

- Deals with correspondence
- Takes and distributes meeting agendas and minutes
- Books facilities such as meeting rooms if required
- Assists the President in the smooth running of the group

The **Treasurer** - responsible for all financial activities and maintains all financial records and bank accounts.

Legal responsibilities

Several legal obligations affect environmental volunteer groups working on public land. These responsibilities include:

- Lawful and responsible governance
- Member safety
- Safe storage of dangerous goods and machinery
- A zero tolerance policy to discrimination and sexual harassment

Group incorporation

Incorporation is a form of registration that gives an association or community group certain legal advantages in return for accepting certain legal responsibilities. Incorporation of an association means that the group becomes a legal entity in its own right, separate from the individual members.

Incorporation is something that can be considered once a group has become well established.

Benefits of becoming incorporated are to:

- Create a legal entity separate from the individual members that provides a level of legal protection
- Continue to exist regardless of changes in membership
- Enter into enforceable contracts including buying and selling property
- Attract and apply for grant funding more easily
- Apply for status as a charity or formally register as an environmental organisation

In becoming incorporated the group needs to be prepared to satisfy the ongoing reporting and procedural requirements of an Incorporated Association. There is a requirement to lodge an annual return.

It is recommended that groups operate with some level of protection and should your group not wish, or be able, to become incorporated it is recommended that your group operates under another organisations incorporation such as the Farm-tree and Landcare Association (FTLA) or local network.

Advantages to this include the same protections, less paperwork and other member benefits.

Volunteer groups **need** to be incorporated or Auspice if the group:

- Wishes to receive funds from a government body or other funds that requires incorporation (i.e. grants)
- Does activities that involve any real risk of personal injury or any other claim for damages
- Wishes to hold property
- Proposes to enter important contracts

It is important to note that usually for a group to be eligible to receive grants, it must be incorporated or be able to make arrangements with another incorporated association to auspice their application.

When a group has incorporated status this protects the personal assets of the committee members in the event an incorporated volunteer group is sued. The incorporated group can only be sued for the value of the incorporated body's assets (e.g. property, cash in bank, tools, equipment and other assets).

However, having said this if an accident does occur as a result of an authorised volunteer activity, Yarra Ranges Council is legally responsible.

For information about volunteer rights visit volunteeringaustralia.org

How to become incorporated

Incorporated Association status is achieved by following the procedures set out in the Associations Incorporations Act 1981.

If a group has insurance with another organisation (FTLA) the group needs to meet the requirement of that insurance also.

Contact Consumer Affairs Victoria for further information or assistance with becoming incorporated on 1300 558 181 or visit the website consumer.vic.gov.au

Managing members and committee

As a committee, you have a responsibility to manage and take care of your volunteers. This includes addressing issues of:

- Volunteer safety
- Conflict management and dealing with grievances
- Ensuring proper conduct when acting on behalf of the group
- Avoiding trading while insolvent (which applies to non-profits as well as businesses). This means making sure you are able to pay your debts
- Avoiding conflicts of interest and acting in the best interest of the group

All volunteers have the right to raise any dissatisfaction, complaint or other grievance with the committee. If adequate action is not taken, volunteers have the right to seek legal advice and action if deemed necessary. Contact Council for advice or for appropriate referral bodies or see Legal responsibilities for further information.



Responsibilities of an Environmental Volunteer Group

Legal responsibilities

Several legal obligations affect environmental volunteer groups working on public land (Council land). For volunteers and the committees of environmental volunteer groups, the relevant Victorian Acts are:

The Associations Incorporation Act 1981

The Dangerous Goods Act 1985

The Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004

Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2014

The Equal Opportunity Act 2010

The **Associations Incorporation Act 1981** identifies the responsibilities and requirements of the committee of any incorporated association. Non- incorporated groups can also follow these guides to ensure sound, successful governance. The Act mostly addresses the responsibilities of the managing committee.

It requires:

- All members in the committee to take care and be diligent when making decisions, in the best interests of the association and its vision, and not to act for self-interest
- All members in the group to work with good faith and proper purpose
- Avoidance of trading while insolvent
- The committee to give adequate information to members on their rights and other documentation, and a grievance procedure to address complaints
- The committee to maintain a register of members for the association

The **Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004** requires YRC and volunteer groups to provide:

- A safe working environment and conditions
- Safe systems of work as identified in [Appendix 5](#)
- provide instruction and training as set out in these guidelines

The **Equal Opportunity Act 2010** addresses discrimination and sexual harassment within volunteer groups. Volunteers now have rights and responsibilities under this Act.

This Act states that:

- All group members understand actions which constitute sexual harassment
- Sexual harassment in any form is not tolerated
- All volunteers understand how to report incidents of sexual harassment
- All volunteers understand that appropriate legal action will follow any incidents

Sexual harassment and the law

Changes to the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 mean that sexual harassment law now applies to volunteers and employees.

All groups now have a legal responsibility to inform their volunteers that sexual harassment is never acceptable, in any form. If you turn a blind eye, and sexual harassment does occur within your group, your organisation and the people in it may be liable.

Every volunteer, staff member and supervisor has a responsibility to ensure that sexual harassment does not occur. Anyone found to have sexually harassed another person will be subject to disciplinary action.

This information has been adopted from Volunteering Victoria's 'Volunteers and the Equal Opportunity Act, 2010 Information Pack'. To access this document visit volunteeringvictoria.com.au

For more information on defining Sexual Harassment and the complaints process see [Appendix 3](#)



Child Safe Standards

The State Government has recently implemented compulsory minimum Child Safe Standards for all organisations and groups that engage with children and young people, under the age of 18. In some circumstances, failure to report or protect children is now a criminal offence.

The standards are designed to drive cultural change in organisations, so that protecting children from abuse is embedded in the everyday thinking and practice of leaders, staff and volunteers.

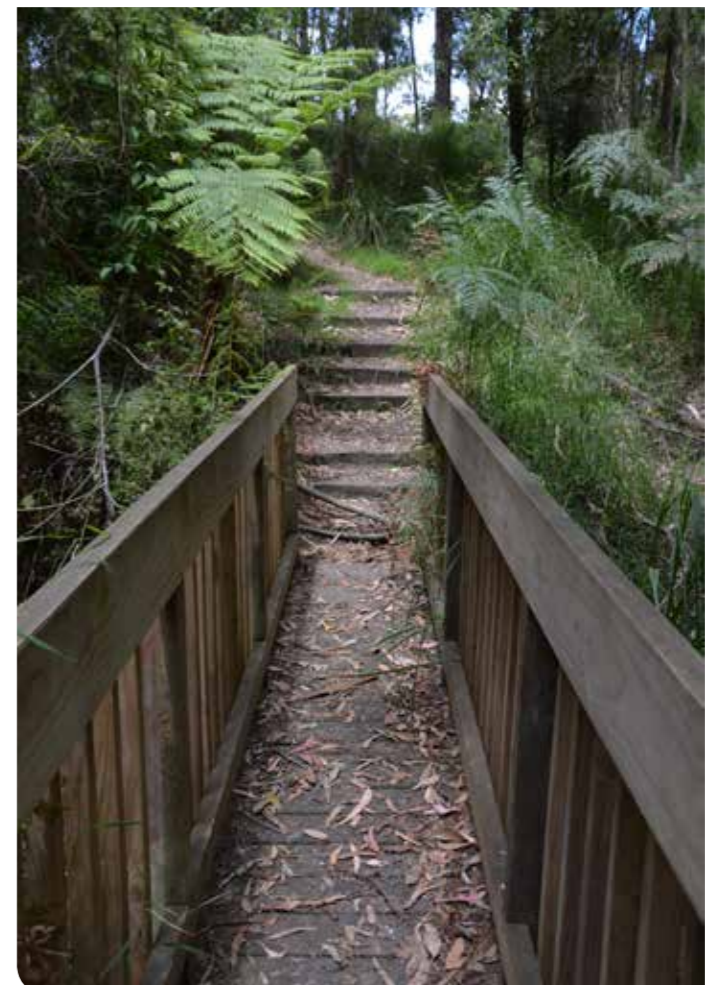
This will assist organisations to:

- Promote the safety of children
- Prevent child abuse
- Ensure effective processes are in place to respond to and report allegations of child abuse

All groups are strongly encouraged to include a Statement of Commitment to Child Safe Standards as part of their Group Governance.

Yarra Ranges Council are committed to keeping all children and young people safe and protecting them from abuse. Child safety is everyone's business.

For more detailed information and an example of a Statement of Commitment please see [Appendix 4](#)



Managing Volunteer Participation

Volunteer Participation Agreement

Environmental volunteers are not Council volunteers, but are rather volunteers supported by Council. Council provides the following advice on managing volunteer participation using best practice for groups.

Before performing any volunteer works it is recommended that participants sign Volunteer Participation Agreement; the agreement covers the responsibilities of a volunteer, and is guided by legislation put in place to protect volunteers when working with an environmental volunteer group (see [Appendix 1](#) – forms and checklists).

It is important to ensure that volunteers read each point carefully. For more information request a copy of the related policies from a committee member or group leader. The Environmental Volunteer Support Officer is available to discuss any questions or concerns you may have.

Safety

The personal safety of every volunteer is a very high priority. Each group is expected to help its members to understand that site safety is the responsibility of each individual participant. When members of the group are volunteering, they need to consider all other people. This includes people who may be indirectly involved, such as walkers, bike riders and other public space users. It is the responsibility of the group to provide clear information, instruction and supervision for its members. This includes making sure that:

- The work-site is as safe as possible and that any hazards are reported to the Site Coordinator
- All tools and equipment are well maintained and in safe working order. **Please report damaged or broken equipment to the Environmental Volunteer Support Officer on 1300 368 333**
- All members adhere to the safety prompts in this guide
- Each activity or working bee must be overseen by a designated Site Coordinator from the environmental volunteer group. Before each activity, the Site Coordinator must check that the site is safe and all tools are safe to use

Whenever you are on-site, the emergency contact list for all participants should be filled out.

The Site Coordinator

At each group event there is to be a designated volunteer who acts as the Site Coordinator and is responsible for safety and directing the planned works. This person is responsible for addressing, communicating and managing any potential hazards identified on-site by the group.

The Site Coordinator:

- Is responsible for planning the works to be undertaken
- Ensures that all participants have the site coordinators contact number
- Ensures all participants have been introduced to key personnel for the day (e.g. Team Leaders, First Aid person)
- Checks that the first aid kit is stocked property, on site and all participants know of its location
- Demonstrate how to do the job safely and monitor activities throughout the course of the event
- Explains details of the day's tasks
- Conducts a tour of the site identifying key areas (e.g. emergency evacuation points, first aid equipment, amenities)
- Checks that volunteers are aware of emergency planning procedures (e.g. how to get out if required)
- Ensures everyone knows the exact location (Melways reference) with the nearest cross street or safety marker if you have one
- Identifies any risks and checks that all volunteers are aware of them

The Site Coordinator must then manage these risks effectively.

- Ensures personal protective equipment is being worn correctly when required
- Ensures all volunteers have read and understood the Code of Conduct and signed in on the Volunteer Registration Form (see [Appendix 1](#))

- Ensures that volunteers do not work in isolation, on total fire ban days or in extreme weather conditions as identified in [Appendix 5](#)
- Reports all hazards identified on site to council immediately
- Undertakes any incident reporting required
- Makes sure that toilets and hygiene materials (e.g. soap, access to hand washing area, toilet paper) are stocked, if needed

The Site Coordinator role does not always need to be filled by the same person. Several group members should be aware of the requirements and be competent in filling the Site Coordinator role if required.

New volunteers

When new volunteers join your group, you should ensure:

- The new volunteer has filled out the membership sign-up and volunteer emergency details forms
- Check that they have been taken through the volunteer registration form, and are familiar with all relevant information required
- Demonstrate and observe correct method to perform the job safely and continue to monitor activities

Underage volunteers

A responsible adult must always be present to accompany volunteers who are minors (under 12 years old). While we wish to encourage volunteers of all ages to participate in our community and environment, it is important to note that volunteers who are minors (under 12 years old) are not covered by Council insurance. If an incident occurs that is caused by the child, the responsible adult may be expected to cover all damages. A guardian must always be present and responsible for a child.

If your group plans to engage with children, whether it be through schools, scout groups or at a community event, it is strongly recommended that all volunteers apply for a Working With Children Check. These are free for volunteers and last for five years, after which you will need to reapply. The cards take up to 12 weeks to arrive, so make sure to apply in plenty of time before any event with children. Checks are not necessary if the event has specifically stated that every child must have a parent / guardian present.

For more information, or to apply for a check, please visit workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au

Event Promotion

Groups are encouraged to advertise all group activities and events via the Yarra Ranges events calendar located on the Yarra Ranges Council website. By advertising groups events via this website you can promote to the wider community, increase your exposure, encourage participation and recruit new members.

If your group requires printing of promotional material, such as posters or flyers, please send a PDF version to the Environmental Volunteer Support Officer with any preferred printing requests and number of copies required. Yarra Ranges Council can also send mail outs to residents local to your event to engage a direct audience.

To register go to yarraranges.vic.gov.au/Events

Before the working day starts

Before the working day starts, you should check that information has been provided to your group regarding:

- Site location
- Activities planned for the day
- Contact details of the Site Coordinator
- Appropriate clothing and personal protective equipment (PPE) required for the activities as outlined in the [Appendix 5](#)
- Any other requirements (e.g. drink bottle and lunch)
- Ensure weather conditions are suitable for planned activities i.e. work is not to be undertaken on Total Fire Ban days and volunteers should avoid working during extreme weather conditions
- A site coordinator and first aid person are designated and present on site during the event

At the end of the day

Record your achievements for the day (e.g. number trees planted) and send this information through to the Bushland Management Officer in your region. Maintain this information as part of your own group records. This information may be useful for your group for future projects, monitoring, funding opportunities, demonstrating milestones and recognizing achievements.

You should ensure you have access to a phone or mobile. All group members should know who has a mobile with them and if it is in range. The closest landline should also be identified. All group members should know their location in case of emergency.



Managing Risk

We measure risk to be low, medium or high. The level of risk can determine whether or not your group can perform that activity without further training or additional control measures put in place.

- Low and medium-risk works are permitted for volunteer groups on Council land; Safe Working Procedures (SWPs) are available for each activity
- High-risk works cannot be performed by your group

To find out which works are High, Medium and Low, and for SWPs for each activity see Safe Work Practices and Procedures table in [Appendix 5](#).

High-risk activities

Council does not support the undertaking of High-risk activities by environmental volunteers. High-risk activities must not be performed. Any exceptions to this must be formally agreed with the Bushland Management Officer and recorded within the Agreed Works Plan and/or Defined Activity Lists. SWPs for high risk activities are not included within this document as any exceptions will be dealt with on an individual basis.

Examples of high-risk activities not to be undertaken by environmental volunteers include the use of:

- Chippers
- Chainsaws
- Ride-on mowers or self-propelled mowers
- Brush cutters with blades
- Petrol-powered generators
- Earth moving machinery
- Chemical use and spraying

The following can be undertaken providing the volunteer has **written permission from council**:

- Mechanical Augers
- Working on sites near machinery
- Working on roadsides requiring traffic management

Anyone with pre-existing injuries is encouraged to undertake alternative duties. Insurance does not cover existing conditions.

Note: Council only supports the use of herbicides use in dabber bottles purchased by volunteers. Any spraying required on public land should be directed to the Bushland Management Officers (1300 368 333) to determine suitability for spraying using contractors.

Personal protective equipment

Personal protective equipment (PPE) is required during volunteer working activities. The purchase and wearing of the PPE is the responsibility of the volunteer. PPE requirements will vary depending upon the activities the volunteer will be undertaking as identified in Safe Working Procedures [Appendix 5](#).

General PPE includes:

- Sturdy footwear (steel capped boots)
- Gloves
- Dust masks
- Long sleeved tops and long pants or gaiters (to protect from sunlight, bites and scratches)
- Hat and sunscreen
- Insect repellent
- High visibility vest
- Protective eye wear - safety glasses

In an effort to support group safety, Council works to identify potential risks, determine acceptable activities and promote training opportunities to help equip volunteers with the required skill set.

Safety: A group responsibility

Environmental volunteers put in enormous efforts each year to improve our environment, campaign for change and protect our precious natural resources. It is important that all volunteers are safe and protected, and are aware of their responsibilities.

As a volunteer group, it is of utmost importance that you, and your members, remain safe at all times. Common sense plays a big part in safety, but it isn't always enough.



Safety is the responsibility of everyone – each individual has to ensure that the work place is as safe as possible.

Volunteers have a responsibility to take care of their own and others' safety, and are recommended to:

- Disclose any pre-existing injury or medical condition, which may be aggravated by participation in any activities, to a responsible committee member
- Wear appropriate personal protective equipment for each activity as outlined in [Appendix 5](#)
- Participate in a site assessment and immediately report any hazards or injuries to the Site Coordinator
- Listen to and follow directions from the Site Coordinator, First Aid person or any committee member when on site
- Raise any concerns or issues to a responsible committee member as soon as possible

It is the responsibility of group leadership and the committee to ensure that:

- Everyone is aware of the risks associated with any works that volunteers intend to perform by first referring to the SWPs
- Members understand that workplace safety is the responsibility of each individual participant
- Committee members provide clear information, instruction and supervision for your members to ensure safe operations
- Environmental volunteers undertake relevant training where required

- The worksite is as safe as possible and that any hazards are reported to the relevant group member (Site Coordinator)
- All tools and equipment are well maintained and in safe working order

Safe work practices and procedures (SWPs)

Safe work practices include taking general safety precautions as well as following recommended Safe Work Procedures (SWPs) see [Appendix 5](#). SWPs are guides for volunteers. They set out the best and safest practices in a range of activities, with varying levels of risk.

Each SWP describes the task, the risks, any protective equipment, risk management strategies, and where to pay special attention.

Using SWPs to manage risk

Site Coordinators are responsible for identifying any hazards that volunteers might need to deal with on-site and must make sure members of the group follow SWP guidelines, including wearing recommended PPE as outlined in [Appendix 5](#).

In addition, always:

- Consider other potential safety issues
- Notify all participants of any risks and the management practices in place





Incident or injury

It is essential that groups working on Council land report any accident, incident, property damage or near miss that occurs to the Health and Safety Team using a Volunteer Incident Report Form (See [Appendix 1](#) Forms and checklists.) Should an incident occur your group will be asked to keep a copy on file in addition to the Health and Safety Teams records.

The purpose of the form is to protect the group and the affected person or property, as well as to assist when reconciling any claims later on. Even minor incidents should be reported, as further medical attention may be required later.

Report any near miss or potential incident to your Site Coordinator and group to ensure your safety and the safety of others during future works.

First aid

Council promotes training opportunities and delivers first aid training as needed. Any upcoming opportunities will be advertised to the Friends Groups to ensure this requirement is met. Council requires at least one member of each volunteer group to be trained to ensure that, in the case of an incident, a certified first aid person is present.

Calling an ambulance

In the case of an emergency dial 000 [triple zero] and ask for ambulance.

When dialling triple zero for an ambulance you will be asked a number of questions about the person and your location. Do your best to remain calm and answer the questions to the best of your ability. The questions will:

- What is the exact location of the emergency?
- What is the phone number you are calling from?
- What is the problem, what exactly happened?
- How many people are hurt?
- How old is the person?
- Is the person conscious (awake)?
- Is the person breathing?

Do not hang up. Follow the instructions offered by the emergency services call taker as the ambulance responds. These will help the patient and the ambulance paramedics.

Ensure you are aware of any allergies or existing medical conditions of your volunteers before administering first aid.



Council Insurance

Council applies for insurance coverage on behalf of environmental volunteer groups who work on Council land. If cover is approved by the provider it covers members of groups on both Council-owned and private land while they are undertaking voluntary work as a member of the environmental volunteer group.

When insured as a group all declared activities are covered once registered as that group. Declared activities are defined as those specified in the application form and current Agreed Works Plan or Activity List. Council insurance does not include office bearers insurance, professional indemnity (both of which FTLA covers) or workcover. Please visit landcarevic.net.au/ftla or worksafe.vic.gov.au

Applying for council insurance

To apply for and determine eligibility for your group to be covered by insurance please request the application form from the Environment Support Officer on 1300 368 333.

Key information you will need to include in the application form is:

- Group name
- Contact name, phone number, postal and email address
- Number of members
- Specific activities to be undertaken by your group (and define if working on private or public land)
- Details of proposed events
- When your group was established

Once the insurer has confirmed approval for cover, council will be sent a Certificate of Currency and inform you of your success. You may attain a copy of the certificates by request for your records.



Group personal accident insurance

Cover provided by: Chubb Personal Accident Insurance Policy & PDS.

Operation of Cover: The insurance being provided under this policy shall only apply whilst an insured person is engaged in voluntary work authorised and under the control of the policyholder, including direct travel to and from the authorised voluntary work.

Age Limits: The insured person must be aged over twelve (12) and under Ninety (90) years of age.

What is covered?

This policy covers members for losses resulting from an accident that occurs whilst engaged and performing voluntary work which is authorised and under the control of the volunteer group. The policy provides:

- Capital Benefits – Death, Permanent Total Disablement, Other Permanent Disablement
- Weekly Injury Benefit
- Injury Assistance Benefit

What is not covered?

There are endorsements, exclusions and limitations to this cover as per the policy terms and conditions of the wording.

- Any pre-existing condition
- NON MEDICARE MEDICAL EXPENSES
If during the period of insurance and whilst the person is a covered person providing services, without payment, to an educational, religious, charitable, or benevolent organisation on behalf of the policyholder, the covered person suffers from a bodily injury, Chubb will pay the Non-Medicare Medical Expenses incurred up to a maximum of \$20,000 excess \$50.

Public liability

Cover provided by: QBE Insurance (Australia) Ltd.

Policy Limit: \$10,000,000 any one occurrence in respect of Public Liability

Policy Excess: \$1,000 each and every claim and other excesses as per the policy

Interest Insured

The Insured legal liability to third parties to pay compensation in respect of death, illness, personal injury and/or property damage occurring during the period of insurance as a result of an occurrence and happening in connection with the activities of the volunteer group as declared and specified.

What is not covered?

There are endorsements, exclusions and limitations to this cover as per the policy terms and conditions of the wording.

Policy Endorsements/Exclusions:

- Professional Indemnity Exclusion (Total)
- Molestation Exclusion
- Temporary Grand Stand and/or Seating
- Exclusion
- Security and Crowd Control Exclusion
- Participation Exclusion
- Pyrotechnics Exclusion
- Amusement Exclusion
- Rock / Pop Concerts Exclusion
- Tree Lopping when tree in excess of 3.5meters in height
- Escape of Fire
- Products Liability (such as children toys, second hand electrical items and tools)

In the event of an incident or injury

It is the responsibility of the Site Coordinator or delegated leader to:

- Contact Council as soon as possible. Talk to your contact in the Parks & Bushland Team or the Duty Officer if after hours on 1300 368 333
- If possible, secure the site trying not to disturb any evidence or place others in harm's way
- Take photographs of the site and if possible draw a diagram of the site
- Cooperate at all times with the insurer and provide access to inspect property
- Do not admit liability or make any offer to pay for any damage or injury
- Write down the circumstances of the incident while they are still fresh in your memory including the time of day and the weather conditions etc
- Get the contact details of any witnesses

It is important to note that Council insurance does not include office bearers insurance, professional indemnity (both of which FTLA covers) and workcover. Please visit landcarevic.net.au/ftla or worksafe.vic.gov.au.



Appendix 1: Volunteer Registration Form

To be completed on the day of the activity

PART 1 - REGISTRATION AND AGREEMENT

Retain this form as a record of attendance.

- Each participant must list their name as a record of their attendance. By ticking the column “I agree to the Volunteer Participation Agreement” and signing their name, the participant acknowledges that they have read and understood the Volunteer’s Participation Agreement. Failure to agree will prevent them from participating in any activities.
- All groups or organisations are expected to have full contact details for all their members, including emergency contact details.
- Any volunteers who are minors must be accompanied by a responsible adult.

Important: You must read the volunteer’s participation agreement before signing

Group Name:

Member Name		I agree to the Volunteer Participation Agreement	Signature	Time in and out
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				
Total Number of Volunteers			Total number of Hours	

PART 2 - GOOD PRACTICE FOR VOLUNTEER PARTICIPATION

This Volunteer’s Participation Agreement sets out the behavior required from anyone participating as an environmental volunteer within this group. The agreement has been revised periodically to ensure that it continues to reflect legislative requirements.

VOLUNTEER’S PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT

I agree to comply with these terms as a participant in the group’s projects and activities. By signing this form, I am agreeing that I understand that:

- I must observe and adhere to any risk prevention measures identified by the Site Coordinator (group representative) and report any hazards I notice immediately in order to ensure the safety of myself and others
- I must respect the rights, feelings and property of all others associated with the project
- I have consented to having my photo/film taken to be used for the purpose of publications and promotion. (If I do not consent, I understand that it is my responsibility to notify the photographer and deliberately avoid being in any photos.)
- While participating at this event I will not consume or be under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- I take full responsibility for the actions of all minors in my care and understand that I am liable for any incident which occurs as a consequence of their actions
- I have notified the Site Coordinator of any pre-existing medical conditions which may affect my ability to participate in any activities and I grant the Site Coordinator’s authority to seek and/or provide medical treatment as deemed necessary
- I will not behave in any way which is likely to make someone else feel offended, humiliated or intimidated, including unwanted sexual behavior
- I understand that my placement and the activities to be undertaken at this worksite will be allocated to me at the discretion of the Site Coordinator
- I am aware that if I fail to adhere to these conditions of participation, and/or breach any reasonable safety thresholds, the Site Coordinator may, at their discretion, request me to cease work or leave the worksite

If you have any questions about any part of the Agreement, please speak with a committee member of the group. You may also contact the Yarra Ranges Environmental Support Officer on 1300 368 333. Advice and assistance is always available.

AUTHORISATION (Office Bearer or Agreed Representative)

I declare that the information on this form is correct and the group has agreed to follow specific instructions, requirements and guidelines in relation to volunteer activities.

NAME:

SIGNATURE:

DATE:



Appendix 2: Site Coordinator’s Site Assessment Form

To be completed on the day of the activity

PART 1 - SITE SAFETY INSPECTION

Group/ Individual Name

Date Weather

Location

Activity Description

GENERAL SAFETY MEASURES

Before you begin your works, make sure you can tick off the following. If you can’t, you should contact Council before continuing with the activities.

- A first aid kit is located on site and all participants know of its whereabouts

All participants are wearing appropriate personal protective equipment including: sturdy shoes, long sleeves and pants, hat, gloves, eye protection, high visibility top, sunscreen as well as any other PPE that is required
- All participants have signed a Volunteer Registration Form and understand their responsibilities

There is no current fire ban or high fire danger warning, or other extreme weather conditions
- All participants have been notified of hazards and risks and necessary actions have been taken to remove or minimise them (see hazards checklist, which identifies site hazards)

You are working with at least one other group member on site

HAZARD CHECKLIST - Run through all identified hazards and solutions with participants.

Describe or identify any hazards that may impact participants activities. (List below or use separate Hazards Checklist and attach it.)

FIRST AID PERSONS PRESENT

NAME: PHONE:

NAME: PHONE:

HIGH RISK ACTIVITIES

Are you performing any high risk activities? E.g. Using Chainsaw or Chipper? Yes No

What is the activity?

If you ticked yes, make sure you can also tick off the following:

- The high-risk activity has been identified as necessary in your Agreed Works Plan

All other participants have been inducted into occupational health and safety and are aware of the risks and site rules
- Only certified volunteers are performing high-risk activities (Council must have a copy of certificate prior to works)

If you answered NO to any of the above, do not proceed with the activity, contact Council.

PART 2 - MONITORING (OPTIONAL)

TOTAL NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS: TOTAL HOURS (Sum of each volunteers hours) :

PROGRESS AND OBSERVATIONS

Weeds	Area/ Amount Removed/ Treated: Method of removal: Hand Pulling Spray Drill and Fill Cut and Paint	Species removed:
Flora	Total number planted: Species:	Unusual/ Rare flora observed:
Fauna	Species observed (direct sightings):	Species observed (indirect: scats. tracks etc.):

General Observations:

Follow up required:

Subjective Quality Score:

Before: /10

After: /10

Work Completed: %

SAFETY CHECK AND MONITORING PERFORMED BY SITE COORDINATOR

NAME:

DATE:



Appendix 3

Sexual Harassment

What is sexual harassment?

Sexual harassment can take various forms. It can involve conduct such as:

- Unwelcome touching, hugging or kissing
- Staring or leering
- Suggestive comments or jokes
- Sexually explicit pictures, screen savers or posters
- Sexual harassment is judged not by what was intended but by how it was received

What to do if sexual harassment occurs?

Making a complaint

If you are a volunteer or paid staff member who believes they have been harassed, you should:

Make a note of the date, time and location of the incident/s .

If you are comfortable doing so, tell the alleged harasser that the behavior is offensive, unwelcome, against the organisation's policy and should stop.

If not comfortable confronting the alleged harasser or if unwelcome behavior continues, report it to a responsible member of the committee (It is a good idea for the committee to nominate a committee member who can deal with any such complaints) .If this is inappropriate, speak to another senior member of the group or contact the Environmental Volunteer Support Officer (1300 368 333), who will refer you to the appropriate person.

The person dealing with the complaint (the Investigating Officer) will follow the procedures set out below. At any time you may discontinue this process.

Complaints process

When a complaint is received, the Investigating **Officer will:**

- Obtain and record a full, step-by-step account of the incident/s
- Ensure the organisation's process for handling the complaint is understood
- Ascertain your preferred outcome (e.g. an apology, the behavior to cease, a change in working arrangements)
- Agree on the next step: informal resolution or formal investigation
- Keep a confidential record of all details of this discussion and subsequent steps in the process

You may also choose to take your complaint to the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (HRC). More information can be found at humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au

Key resources

Volunteering Victoria, 2011, Volunteers and the Equal Opportunity Act, 2010 Information Pack, volunteeringvictoria.com.au

Effectively preventing and responding to sexual harassment: a Code of Practice for employers by the Australian HRC.

Appendix 4

Child Safe Standards for Volunteer Groups

For small organisations with limited access to resources, implementing the Child Safe Standards may appear challenging. The standards are not intended to be onerous; they are designed to keep children safe from child abuse. They are also flexible, allowing you to tailor them to your organisation.

Building a culture of child safety in your organisation will not happen overnight – this is the case for all organisations, regardless of their size. Keeping children safe from abuse requires long-term, genuine dedication, along with a commitment to continuous learning and improvement.

What is child abuse?

- Physical Abuse – non-accidental infliction of physical violence, which injures or harms a child
- Sexual Abuse - when an adult uses force or power to involve a child in sexual activity
- Emotional/Psychological Abuse –rejecting, isolating, excluding, threatening, verbal abuse, coldness
- Neglect - failing to meet a child's basic needs; food, drink, clothing, hygiene, medical attention, supervision
- Family Violence – any violent, threatening, coercive or controlling behaviour in a domestic setting
- Grooming – when an adult communicates and/or attempts to establish a relationship to prepare a child for sexual activity at a later time

What to do

If there's a disclosure, allegation or observation made and you have reasonable belief that a child is in need of protection, you must act. There are processes that guide how to report.

Immediate physical danger or if the concern relates to child sexual abuse

You must report it to Victoria Police on 000 and contact the Environmental Volunteer Support Officer (EVSO) or the leader of your group to inform them a report has been made.

Concerns where there is a reasonable belief that a child is at risk of abuse

You must contact the EVSO or the leader of your group before reporting to authorities.

Report to DHHS Child Protection on 1300 363 391 or 13 12 87 (after hours).

Concerns for a child's ongoing wellbeing but abuse is not an immediate risk.

You must contact the EVSO or the leader of your group before reporting to authorities.

Report to Child First on 1300 369 146

The Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP) is the oversight body for the standards, for more information visit <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safety/>.

Child Safe Standard 2: Example Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

[Insert group name] is committed to safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision-making.

[Insert group name] has zero tolerance for child abuse.

[Group name] is committed to providing a child safe environment where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Particular attention will be paid to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the safety of children with a disability. Every person involved in [Insert group name] has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role he/she plays individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make

All children who participate in our activities have a right to feel and be safe. We encourage children to express their views and we listen to their suggestions, especially on matters that directly affect them.



Appendix 5

Safe Work Practices and Procedures

	Potential Risk	Management of Risk	Risk Category
Volunteer Activities on/in Public Spaces	<p>Injury to others using public spaces.</p> <p>Distraction and subsequent injury.</p> <p>Property damage by volunteers.</p> <p>Threats to personal safety and belongings.</p> <p>Potential contact with contaminants such as sharps or toxins.</p> <p>Abuse from members of the public.</p>	<p>Assess designated work area for hazards and risks.</p> <p>Use signage when working in a public area to notify general public that works are occurring (e.g. 'Work in progress' signs). Block off an area using road cones or tape.</p> <p>When operating machinery (e.g. mower) always ensure a second person is present to watch out for and warn the general public.</p> <p>Remain vigilant and aware at all times.</p> <p>Keep belongings in a safe place at all times.</p>	LOW
Volunteer Activities on/in rough terrain	<p>Sprains and strains.</p> <p>Broken limbs.</p> <p>Impact injuries (hands, knees, back, head)</p> <p>Trips, slips and falls</p>	<p>Identify any danger zones and notify all participants of the associated hazards.</p> <p>Wear appropriate PPE - including sturdy footwear.</p> <p>Clear paths and remove hazards where possible (e.g. fill in holes, move branches.).</p> <p>Cordon off or flag immovable hazards.</p> <p>Do not carry awkward or heavy objects while navigating rough terrain.</p> <p>Do not run, jump or climb for access to work areas.</p>	
Volunteer Activities on/in hot conditions	<p>Dehydration or heat stroke.</p> <p>Headaches and cramps.</p> <p>Heat exhaustion.</p> <p>Sun burn, and longer-term, skin cancer. Injuries or damage as a result of fatigue</p>	<p>Ensure volunteers have adequate access to water to maintain hydration.</p> <p>Work in shaded areas as much as possible.</p> <p>Have regular breaks.</p> <p>Ensure all participants are adequately protected from the sun/heat by wearing PPE.</p> <p>Avoid hottest parts of the day by working in early morning or late afternoon.</p> <p>Council discourages working on High Fire Danger or Total Fire Ban days.</p> <p>If the temperature is over 35° c or humidity levels reach 80% consider rescheduling.</p>	

	Potential Risk	Management of Risk	Risk Category
Volunteer Activities on/in cold conditions	<p>Hypothermia.</p> <p>Loss of dexterity and fine motor control and subsequent injuries due to reduced tool handling ability.</p> <p>Colds and flu or other illness.</p> <p>Dehydration.</p> <p>Increased risk of slipping.</p>	<p>Warm up before activity.</p> <p>Wear appropriate PPE - including warm clothing and rain gear.</p> <p>Ensure plenty of food and drink are available (include warm options like tea and coffee).</p> <p>Work in sheltered areas where possible, and ensure cover is available when taking breaks.</p> <p>Avoid working in extreme weather conditions.</p>	LOW
Bites, stings and threats from wildlife	<p>Insect bites and stings</p> <p>Spider or snake bites</p> <p>Injury from wildlife in distress</p>	<p>Identify & avoid risky areas (e.g. nests or hives).</p> <p>Wear PPE (long trousers/ gaiters, long sleeves and gloves).</p> <p>Walk heavily and work/walk along a single line through snake habitat (prevents snake from being trapped).</p> <p>Avoid lifting objects which may conceal a snake. If required use an aid (e.g. crowbar).</p> <p>If you see a snake, avoid the area and notify all participants as well.</p> <p>If an injured animal is found on site, don't handle it. Call Wildlife Rescue.</p>	
General activities: litter collection, mulching, weeding and planting	<p>Manual handling</p> <p>General injuries</p> <p>Pathogens from infected soils</p> <p>Disease (e.g. needle stick injuries –hepatitis A & B, tetanus)</p> <p>Bites, stings and threats from wildlife</p>	<p>Demonstrate proper manual handling techniques (safely lifting objects, working with awareness of others, staying with the group).</p> <p>Rotate tasks between personnel to avoid repetitive strain injuries.</p> <p>Be aware of all potential risks (e.g. handling soil with glass, falling branches).</p> <p>Allow plenty of breaks and encourage regular stretching.</p> <p>Ensure hand washing facilities are available (especially if handling rubbish, soil, chemicals, etc.).</p> <p>Be aware of sharps and syringes and dispose of safely and correctly (into a 'sharps' container provided at a Yarra Ranges Community Link).</p> <p>If you come across hazardous material (e.g. asbestos) do not handle it. Report it to your site coordinator immediately</p>	

	Potential Risk	Management of Risk	Risk Category
Manual Handling	Injuries due to overexertion, such as Strains, muscle ache or other discomfort, Especially in back, neck, torso and shoulders Hernia	Warm up and stretch throughout the day. Lifting aids should be used if possible. Ensure no one lifts beyond their limits, and do a team lift where possible. Sufficient space should be available to achieve the correct lifting techniques. Plan the path before making the move. Ensure there are no obstructions or other risks when moving the load. Demonstrate proper lifting techniques (load should be close to the body, the back should not be twisted, avoid carrying with one hand, always bend knees, lift slowly & smoothly). Rotate tasks between participants. Grip object securely – use the whole hand. Heavy items should not be lifted alone – work in pairs/group (use lifting aids).	LOW
Using Small Tools	Injuries to self, other volunteers or property due to tool misuse Overexertion and strain injuries	Ensure equipment is in safe, working order. Ensure space around the operator is clear. Be aware of all other workers/public space users in your vicinity. Always ensure the right tool is used for the job. Seek advice from team leader Ensure correct, tight grip on object and wear gloves if necessary. Use tools when in a stable, comfortable position. Rotate tasks between volunteers. After use, tools should be cleaned as required. All tools should be stored in a safe, lockable place when not in use.	
Working near water	Drowning Threatening organisms (snakes, mosquitoes, water-borne disease, etc.) Exposure to cold	Identify dangerous areas (assess things like depth, current, murkiness, turbulence, difficulty to escape, underwater snags, etc.) Ensure all volunteers are aware of and remain a safe distance from all identified danger areas. Ensure that all volunteers work with a partner. Avoid unstable, slippery or steep banks. Flag or fence off any high-risk areas. Provide washing facilities.	

	Potential Risk	Management of Risk	Risk Category
Tools in the field			
Cordless drill	Cuts and abrasions from sharp drill-bits Clothing caught up in drill Wrist injury from drill backlash	Be aware of what you are drilling into, check for wires, nails etc. Wear dust mask if necessary. Always wear eye protection (goggles). Never point a drill towards another person or yourself. Ensure drill clutch is engaged when drilling. Don't force the drill. Let it do the work. If in doubt, ask for assistance.	MEDIUM
Hammer & Mash Hammer	Muscle/joint injury from swing and impact Hand injury from collision	Ensure fingers don't get in the way. Don't rush. Take your time. Only use a hammer when appropriate (would a mallet be more suited to this task?). Your thumb should be extended along hiltl of the hammer for accurate direction. Ensure working space is clear of objects an people. Watch out for fingers. Maintain a firm grip when using.	
Hamilton Planters	Slips and falls Injury to feet and legs	Hold the hand grips firmly. Step up onto the footstep and apply body weight until desired depth in achieved. Do not jump onto footsteps.	
Hand mattock	Muscle/joint injury from swing and impact Hand injury from collision Injury to bystanders Flying material	Watch out for feet and other body parts. Don't throw when swinging. Ensure your grip is tight and secure. Ensure working space is clear of objects and other people. Wear eye protection during the activity. Never leave a mattock lying on the ground (if someone stands on it can fly up and hit them in the face). Secure the object being cut, and cut it at an appropriate height (hip level: torso, mid-range).	
Handsaw or bow saw	Cuts and abrasions Muscle/joint injury from motion	Beware of the sharp blade. Ensure fingers, limbs, and clothing are well out of the way. Before use, ensure the blade teeth are sharp to avoid excessive strain.	

	Potential Risk	Management of Risk	Risk Category
Knife	Cuts from blades Muscle/joint injury from motion Injury to bystanders	Be careful when using a knife and ensure all body parts stay out the way. Transport the knife in a case. Keep a safe distance away from others. Never point a knife at another person. Always point the blade towards the ground and away from body.	MEDIUM
Loppers	Cuts from blades Muscle/joint injury from straining Injury to bystanders	Always carry by the handles, with blades facing the ground. Do not overreach while using. Do not climb while carrying loppers. Be careful if climbing while carrying loppers.	
Rake	Impact from flicking up Muscle/joint injury from motion Flying debris	Always be aware of those around you and ensure you don't accidentally hit them with the end of the rake. Do not leave the rake lying on the ground where it may be stood on. Do not use the rake as a digging tool.	
Secateurs	Cuts from blades Muscle/joint injury from motion Injury to others	Always carry by the handle, with blades facing the ground. Be cautious of blades. Don't run fingers along the edges. Keep fingers clear when cutting materials. Ensure safety lock is fastened when not in use. Be careful when cleaning and sharpening.	
Shovel	Muscle/joint injury from motion Foot injury	Always be aware of the blade. Make sure your digging technique does not put others at risk. Manual handling risk: use the right size of shovel. Be aware of other peoples feet.	
Wheelbarrow	Muscle/joint injury from motion	Don't overload barrow, and evenly distribute the weight in the barrow. Take care on uneven ground and consider alternate path or wooden planks to assist movement. Never allow someone to walk alongside the barrow (in case of tipping). Wheel the barrow on a safe, clear path. Avoid excessive inclines and slippery surfaces.	

	Potential Risk	Management of Risk	Risk Category
Brush-cutters and push mowers (only household 'handy-person' low power equipment will be allowed)	Burns Hand, foot, limb injuries Overexertion and strain injuries Eye injuries (from flying materials) Ear damage or headaches (from loud, excessive noise) Dust inhalation Manual handling strain Flying debris Ignition sources	Warm up and stretch before starting work. Assess site before starting work. Ensure appropriate PPE (high vis, long trousers, steel cap boots, eye and ear protection, gloves and when using a brush-cutter a face shield with safety glasses) and other equipment is used and available. Place 'Work in progress' signage appropriately before beginning work. Avoid working within 20 metres of vehicles and public users of the area. When decanting fuel ensure fully covered clothing and gloves are worn. Abide by the Dangerous Goods Act 1985 which governs the use and storage of fuel by groups. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That storage areas are safely designed. • Equipment is properly maintained & operates safely. • Appropriate PPE is provided. • There are no ignition sources in hazardous areas. • That safety instructions to visitors are provided. • That personnel are equipped in the handling of chemicals and dangerous substances. 	MEDIUM
Dabber bottles containing Herbicide	Poisoning Skin or eye irritation or burning Respiratory impairment or damage Risk of fire explosion	Only the use of Herbicide in dabber bottles is approved by Council for volunteers. Any spraying required should be directed to the Bushland Management Officers (1300 368 333). No spraying is permitted by volunteers. Consider the location & sensitivity of any flora & fauna. Do not carry out any herbicide use in wet weather. Check all relevant equipment to ensure everything is in working order before use. Ensure appropriate PPE and other equipment is used. Ensure use of chemicals in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.	
Working near roadsides	Respiratory and eye irritation (from exhaust fumes or dust) Ear damage or difficulty communicating (due to excessive noise) Collision or impact injuries	Volunteers are not to work within 10 metres of the roadside. Maintain direct and continual supervision and ensure volunteers remain vigilant of their surroundings. Decide upon non-verbal signals which can be used to communicate with your team. Make sure everyone understands the signals, and that they are clear and unambiguous. Avoid dust or fumes and work upwind where possible.	HIGH



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