

# Community Update

## MacKenzie Falls Revitalisation



Spring 2023

MacKenzie Falls is one of the most spectacular and most visited sites in the Grampians (Gariwerd) National Park. It is on the Traditional Lands of the Jardwadjali and Djab Wurrung peoples.

The MacKenzie Falls precinct is being revitalised. The full scope for the \$7.76 million project is being determined but is likely to include improved information and education signage, a new viewing platform at the base of the Falls, improvements to walking tracks, safety, car parking and managing visitor congestion.

Parks Victoria is working in partnership with Barengi Gadjin Land Council Aboriginal Corporation, Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation, and Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation to plan the revitalisation.

**This update includes information on progress, timelines and next steps for the project.**



Photo 1 – Rock stepping stones to unsafe area being removed.

### Safety at MacKenzie Falls

Storms and flooding in late 2022 impacted the MacKenzie Falls precinct. Following this, a geotechnical assessment done as part of the revitalisation project identified rockfall risks, particularly at the rock shelf area opposite the base of the Falls.

Works to restrict public access to the rock shelf were completed earlier this year. This included removing rock stepping stones over the river that were previously installed by Parks Victoria.

Further work to protect visitors from potential rockfalls will be done as part of the revitalisation. This may include proposed netting over rock cliff faces and slight realignment of sections of track.

### Project scope updates

One of the key elements of the MacKenzie Falls Revitalisation project is a proposed new viewing platform at the base of the Falls. This will be built on the same side of the track as the Falls. Access to the rock shelf opposite the base of the Falls will no longer be permitted for safety reasons.

The Return Loop Trail will not be constructed as part of this project due to the prohibitive cost. However, other measures are being considered to reduce congestion on the trail to the base of the Falls.

To further disperse visitors we will also encourage people to visit at less busy times of the day, park at Zumsteins day visitor area and walk from there, or

enjoy views from alternate lookouts including the Cranages and Bluff lookouts, and nearby Broken Falls. The walking trail to the Bluff lookout will also be upgraded as part of this project.

## Project timeline

Storms late last year, the geotechnical risks and other complexities have led to a change in the timelines for the project. The revitalisation works are now due to be completed by June 2025.

## What's next

We are continuing to refine the details of the project to ensure it celebrates and protects cultural heritage and the natural environment, improves visitor safety and enhances visitor experiences, within the available budget.

Once specific designs for the upgrades, including the new lookout at the base of the falls have been created, we will share them with the community. Previous community input and planning will influence the final designs.

We will continue to keep stakeholders and the community updated as the project progresses.

## Who we are working with

Parks Victoria, Barengi Gadjin Land Council Aboriginal Corporation, Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation and Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation are working in partnership to design and deliver this project.

Parks Victoria also hosts a Gariwerd Tourism Infrastructure Reference Group that includes local government agencies, Grampians Tourism, Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action, and the Tourism, Events and Priority Infrastructure and Regional Development Victoria branches of the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions. The role of this group is to provide input and feedback on the plans throughout the planning and design process.

The Grampians National Park Advisory Group was heavily involved in the development of the 2017 Concept Plan for the site and informed the initial plans for this project.

This revitalisation project is in line with the Greater Gariwerd Landscape Management Plan, which received significant community input.

## Other improvements in the park

Planning is well underway to improve access to the Grampians Peaks Trail with upgraded access points.

We have recently gone out to tender for construction of these upgrades. They will include upgrades in the centre of Halls Gap as well as a range of other locations along the trail.

The proposed [new trailhead in Halls Gap](#) will better connect the town to the mountains with a new track and boardwalk, gathering spaces, rock seating and signage. To stay informed about this project [sign up for updates](#).



*Photo 2 – Concept illustration of aerial view of Halls Gap (Budja Budja) trailhead.*

Parks Victoria is also working with Gariwerd Traditional Owners to develop a Business and Master Plan for the Brambuk Cultural Centre and precinct. While this is being done, we are also investigating and undertaking early safety improvements and refurbishments at the Cultural Centre and across the precinct. The Brambuk Cultural Centre building is currently closed, but the Visitor Centre remains open to the public and has received a new decking as part of the early works.

## Stay up to date

If you haven't already, please [sign up for updates](#) to stay informed about the MacKenzie Falls revitalisation.

If you have any questions please contact us at [engage@parks.vic.gov.au](mailto:engage@parks.vic.gov.au) or call 13 1963.

