

MEMBER FOR NORTHERN VICTORIA REGION, CANDY BROAD ANNOUNCES FUNDING

The following grants are being provided under the Brumby Labor Government's *Small Towns Development Fund* initiative through Regional Development Victoria.

\$32,200 HOPETOUN TOURISM

Tourism in Hopetoun is set to grow after upgrading of facilities at the site of the town's two major attractions.

Along with construction of toilets, an extension to the park's display shed and a working blacksmith shop will be built at McGinnis Park, home to the historic Corrong Homestead and the Hopetoun and District Historical Society vintage farm display.

Ms Broad said developing the park's appeal to tourists was important because of the drought's impact on the region's farming community.

The McGinnis Park Facilities Upgrade Project, which will be managed by Yarriambiack Shire Council, will construct:

- ✧ A amenities block with disabled access;
- ✧ An extension to the display shed to help house the growing number of restored farm equipment
- ✧ A working blacksmith shop, made from donated materials.

\$66,100 LAKE MARMA WALKING TRACK

A continuous walking track will be built around Murtoa's Lake Marma.

There is an existing walking track – about three kilometres long – along the east, south and west shorelines of the lake.

The project will excavate the silt from the dry Lake bed to create a 16-metre wide embankment at the north end of the Lake which will link the existing walking track from the east and west sides of the Lake, a length of some 185 metres.

The embankment will be protected from erosion by laying Geofabric under appropriate beaching material.

\$300,000 ROAD CLEARING

Jobs for drought-hit farmers and safer roads will result from a roadside clearance project backed by a \$300,000 Small Town Drought Program.

The \$400,000 Yarriambiack Roadside Clearance project is expected to recruit up to 50 farmers to share the equivalent of eight full-time jobs which will link with the Wimmera Region's Rural Skills Connect initiative to train up any skill gaps.

Ms Broad said the farmers would receive certified training in using chainsaws and other equipment

and in managing trees while cutting back roadside vegetation all over the shire.

The Rural Skills Connect program – a Moving Forward Update initiative - aims to use the transferable skills of the farm related rural sector to meet rural industry skill gaps and employment requirements

\$124,905 TO GIVE TRAVELLERS AND MINYIP LOCALS A BREAK

Funding of \$124,905 to develop modern facilities at Minyip Wetlands will encourage more visitors and provide a restful social environment for residents.

The Small Towns Drought Program is providing \$124,905 to Yarriambiack Shire Council for the \$172,450 project, which will include:

- o Construction of a pedestrian bridge and all-weather parking area;
- o Barbecue, shelter, picnic tables and seating
- o Bench seating along the walking track
- o Amenities block with toilets, showers and a disabled toilet, and.
- o Powered camping sites

"Twelve years of drought have severely affected the Minyip community, and the Minyip Wetlands Travellers' Rest Development will provide social, economic and tourism benefits to the local and wider community," Ms Broad said.

"In encouraging visitors to stay longer, it will help diversify and increase regional income to be less dependent on agriculture, and support community-owned enterprises such as Emma's Café.

"It will provide jobs and activities for local residents – all goods and services for this project will be sourced locally, with local contractors to be engaged for the works.

"It will promote eco-tourism with a landscape design that brings out Minyip's natural assets.

"The community of Minyip has identified this project as its priority.

"That tremendous community support is demonstrated by the amount of voluntary labour and equipment to be supplied by the community," Ms Broad said.

"This project will also provide a quiet, peaceful area for the local community to enjoy for community barbecues, social gatherings, or family recreation, all of which foster social inclusion and interaction."

Ms Broad said small towns like Minyip need infrastructure that encourages social inclusion and

interaction, particularly in these harder times of drought and economic uncertainty.”

Regional and Rural Development Minister, Jacinta Allan said the grant for the Minyip Wetlands Travellers’ Rest Development is being provided under the Small Towns Drought Program as part of the Brumby Labor Government’s *Small Towns Development Fund* initiative through Regional Development Victoria.

Yarriambiack Shire Council is providing \$37,500 funding and in-kind community contributions \$10,000.

Ms Allan said the project typified fund initiatives which were making a big difference to drought-affected towns in provincial Victoria.

The fund has helped develop 436 community and social infrastructure projects.



Whats on for the
MAYOR

Wednesday 22nd July 2008
9.30am – Council Forum
Yarriambiack Shire Council,
WARRACKNABEAL