

Media Release

Wednesday, 1 June 2016

Grampians to Pyrenees Biolink Celebration in Halls Gap

Natural Resource Managers, Landholders and the wider community will gather in Halls Gap on Thursday 9th of June to learn more about Wildlife Corridors, Grampians to Pyrenees Biolink Project achievements and to plan for the future.

The Grampians to Pyrenees Biolink is a collaborative Project which aims to improve the ecological connectivity between the Grampians and Pyrenees Ranges. It provides habitat through a combination of stepping stones and wildlife corridors enabling ecological function to be maintained through a network of farmland and public land reserves.

This project is supported by Project Platypus, through funding from the Australian Government.

Project Coordinator with Project Platypus Leigh Blackmore said Dr Geoff Wescott, a professor at Deakin University in the School of Life and Environmental Sciences would lead discussions on the importance of Wildlife Corridors and Bio-links and the role they play in maintaining a functioning environment.

“Geoff specialises in environmental policy, planning and management with an emphasis on nature conservation and marine/ coastal environments. In 2013 Geoff co-authored “Linking Australia’s landscapes: lessons and opportunities from large-scale conservation networks” Leigh said.

The event will be held at Brambuk in Halls Gap from 9.30am until 2pm. “We will be launching a recently produced document that outlines the future direction of the Biolink. This document has been produced by Dr Sophie Bickford from the Central Victorian Bio-links Group with input from project partners. Sophie will make a presentation summarising this document and will explain how this plan will be used” Leigh said

“The event is about raising awareness of the Grampians to Pyrenees Biolink for those interested in conservation and land management” Leigh said.

“The Biolink isn’t about replacing farmland with native vegetation. The idea is to work with farmers and land managers to undertake native vegetation establishment and improvement works that benefit both the farm and the environment. It also works across public and private land addressing weed and pest animal control issues” Leigh said.

Over the last three years, a number of organisations have banded together in a concerted effort to move this project forward. Those groups involved have included Project Platypus, Wimmera Catchment Management Authority, Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority, Parks Victoria, Trust for Nature, Conservation Volunteers Australia, Corrections Victoria and a number of Landcare groups. To date 350 hectares of land have been revegetated with over 150,000 native plants, an additional 350 hectares of native vegetation fenced out from stock and 2,500 hectares of rabbit and weed control works on public land.

Anyone with an interest is invited to attend, however registration is essential. To register for the event or to find out more information please send an email to leigh@platypus.org.au or phone 0448505796 or 53584410.