



6 November 2013

### **MAYOR AND LOCAL MEMBER LEND A HAND TO WORKERS ON VDP ECO RESERVE**

Ken Smith, Member for Bass, and Bass Coast Shire Council Mayor, Clare Le Serve, lent a helping hand to workers today to complete planting on the Victorian Desalination Project's ecological reserve.

The duo planted the last two of the millions of plants, trees and shrubs that have been installed in the 225 ha reserve, in what is one of the biggest ecological restoration initiatives ever undertaken in Victoria.

Cr Le Serve said she was very pleased to have been involved in the milestone occasion.

"It is wonderful to see this area, which was excavated during the plant's construction and before that had been cleared after years of grazing and mining, being revived as a new coastal park for the enjoyment of the local community, for generations to come," said Cr Le Serve.

The world-class revegetation project has transformed the cleared area into the rich ecologies that existed before settlement. It has also completed the missing link in the otherwise continuous line of coastal vegetation.

Ken Smith said "I congratulate all those involved in creating this magnificent reserve and keenly look forward to the site being opened up to the public for their use. I am sure it won't be long after opening we see runners, riders, walkers and other nature lovers making the most of this great Bass Coast asset available to our community and future generations to enjoy."

Plant Director, Mike Jury said a lot of thought and planning had gone into the restoration project.

"Every aspect of the 225 ha has been thoughtfully dealt with. All of the 1.45 million cubic meters of soil excavated during the plant's construction (enough to fill the MCG) has been reused to form the constructed dune system that blends with the natural dunes," said Mr Jury.

"The indigenous vegetation that has been planted to stabilise the dunes and integrate the desalination plant into the landscape has come from seed stock collected within 40kms of the plant, and cultivated in temporary nurseries set up on the site," he said.

Included in the reserve are eight kilometres of trails for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders, a bird hide, viewing decks and boardwalks and picnic shelters.

It will be formally opened to the community in early 2014.

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#### **For further information:**

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