

Devilbend



DEVILBEND RESERVE - A STRATEGIC PLANNING APPROACH

Draft December 2006

Announcement

The Victorian Government's announcement in January 2006 that the 1000 ha decommissioned Devilbend Reservoir site on the Mornington Peninsula be set aside as a conservation reserve was a landmark in protection of biodiversity. The mosaic of natural bush and farmland and the two water bodies on this large site are presently much richer in natural birdlife and other fauna than the surrounding countryside. It offers great potential for complete rehabilitation as a world-class conservation reserve. Due to its central location, Devilbend is a perfect nucleus from which to re-connect habitat along corridors radiating across and down the Peninsula.

Environment Minister, the Hon. John Thwaites has called for active community engagement in its planning and management. This reflects strong interest already shown by the community for several years and supports a growing level of involvement. This enthusiasm will be fuelled by new research and practical approaches to ecological restoration. Significant environmental awareness and education outcomes will follow, helping to strengthen stewardship of Devilbend.

Today on the Mornington Peninsula less than 5% of original native bushland remains, mostly in small fragments. Many species of fauna are either locally extinct or severely threatened. Restoration of Devilbend is a rare opportunity to significantly reverse the continuing destruction.

A 'Community Vision' developed for Devilbend by over 40 community groups proposes a gradual restoration program carried out thoughtfully over the next fifty years. This presents challenging and exciting new opportunities for partnerships between government, community groups, academic institutions, business and other interested people. It will include significant research, education and other appropriate activities associated with the reserve. This document outlines a strategic planning approach to help achieve this community vision for Devilbend Reserve through working together.

THIS DOCUMENT

Purpose of this booklet

Victorian Minister for the Environment, Hon John Thwaites, emphasised in his January 2006 announcement that:

'Community participation in the management and maintenance of the new Park is a must ... The park will require a long-term program of habitat restoration to strengthen its ecological quality, providing an opportunity for enthusiastic volunteers to contribute their skills and energy ... Parks Victoria would be appointed committee of management for the land and work with community groups in planning for an environmentally sustainable park.'

The purpose of this booklet is to propose a planning approach for this partnership between government and community. The approach is based on a co-operative strategic and operational framework that combines skills, experience and resources to support effective and timely actions.

What's inside

Inside this booklet you will find:

- Background to Devilbend and its Reserve status
- A Strategic Planning Approach for Devilbend
- The Devilbend Planning Web including:
our Vision and Guiding Principles
our Key Outcomes and Goals for the Reserve
- Key areas of working together to make it happen
- Proposed next steps in developing the intergenerational Devilbend Strategic Plan ...



Introducing the Devilbend Foundation

In January 2004, an alliance of over 40 environmentally concerned community groups, the Devilbend Steering Group (DSG) was formed to promote 'A Community Vision' for Devilbend. The DSG included peak groups such as the Australian Conservation Foundation, Birds Australia and Environment Victoria, as well as key local groups including Westernport & Peninsula Protection Council and Southern Peninsula Indigenous Flora & Fauna Association; altogether representing hundreds of thousands of citizens. They have now formed an incorporated apex body, the Devilbend Foundation Inc., with provision and encouragement for additional supportive groups to become involved.

The Foundation Mission is:

"to support the Victorian Government and other agencies in the creation and maintenance of a world-class conservation reserve for the long-term benefit of Victoria, centered on the Devilbend Reservoir site".

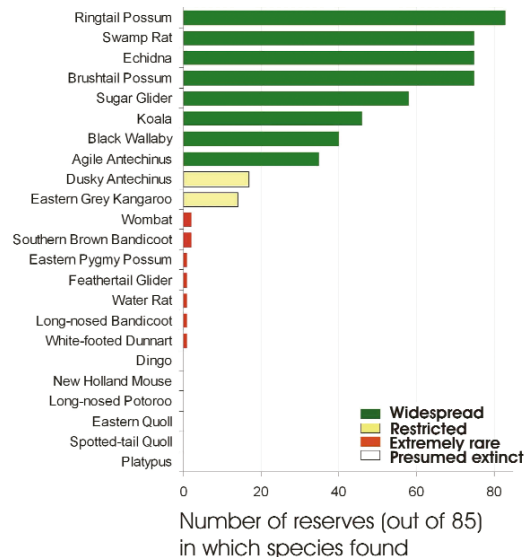
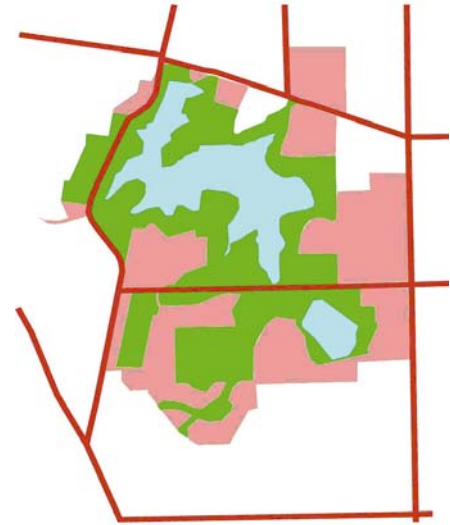
The Foundation has been created to link Parks Victoria with the community, offering coordinated inputs of knowledge, skills, on-site labour, and extended funding opportunities.

BACKGROUND

History of the reservoir

The water storage role of Devilbend and Bittern Reservoirs was replaced in the late 1990's by a new large pipeline from Cardinia Reservoir. The Devilbend public land includes about 300-400 ha of medium to high quality habitat, about 400 ha of cleared land leased for grazing, and 200-300 ha of water. The site has been protected from public access since the catchment areas were acquired in the 1960s.

A 2002 Draft Master Plan (DMP 2002) prepared by Melbourne Water proposed the sale of the cleared land, and the creation of a relatively narrow, fragmented 'metropolitan' park around the margins of the water bodies. The Draft Plan was seen by local environment groups, ecologists and the wider public as missing a unique opportunity to recover a large tract of fast-disappearing habitat of great significance to the Mornington Peninsula.



Transition to a new future

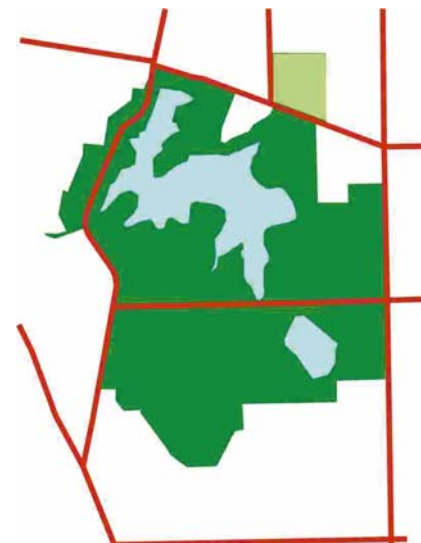
A State Government public consultation process in July 2003 found strong support for a "Community Vision" that proposed retention of the site in one large holding for restoration as a wildlife reserve. This well-researched response to the DMP 2002 gained further widespread support through the media and public meetings over the following years.

The Government's 2004 *Devilbend Working Group* found overwhelming evidence of the ongoing local extinction of native species and threats to biodiversity on the Peninsula, and supported the community's urgent call for restoration of patches of wildlife habitat of meaningful size. (see Summary Report, DWG, 2004). The whole of Devilbend was recognised as an ideal site for this critical purpose – a 'wildlife restoration reserve'.

Creating the Reserve

The Park was created as a Natural Features Reserve (NFR), a category of Conservation Reserve under the *Crown Land Reserves Act 1978*, and handed over from Melbourne Water Corporation to Parks Victoria on 21 September 2006.

The protective regulations associated with the NFR designation for nature conservation, however, are not strong enough to ensure that adverse uses of the land are prohibited. Therefore an important objective of the Foundation is to achieve promotion of the Devilbend Reserve to a safer designation, ideally as an additional segment of Mornington Peninsula National Park or to a new category such as 'Wildlife Restoration Reserve'.



THE PLANNING APPROACH

Ongoing community engagement

It is vital to engage wide-ranging community perspectives in the next phase, which involves establishing an approach to protect and manage Devilbend Reserve. A significant number of community groups, neighbours and other key interest groups are keen to put forward ideas, as well as participate in and support management programs. A strategic plan is needed to facilitate active involvement of the community in the planning and management of the asset, and to coordinate cooperative action.



Creating a strategic plan

The community's vision of Devilbend Reserve as a world-class conservation reserve, as a place of learning, and the focal point for Peninsula nature conservation, requires an effective planning framework. This framework needs to encompass a range of goals and key actions related to conservation, research, public input and use of Devilbend Reserve. The *Devilbend Foundation* proposes the participation in, and development of, a strategic plan involving key stakeholders including Parks Victoria, other agencies, key interest groups and community representatives. This process will assist in developing a strong co-operative approach to ongoing management.

Partnerships and cooperative action

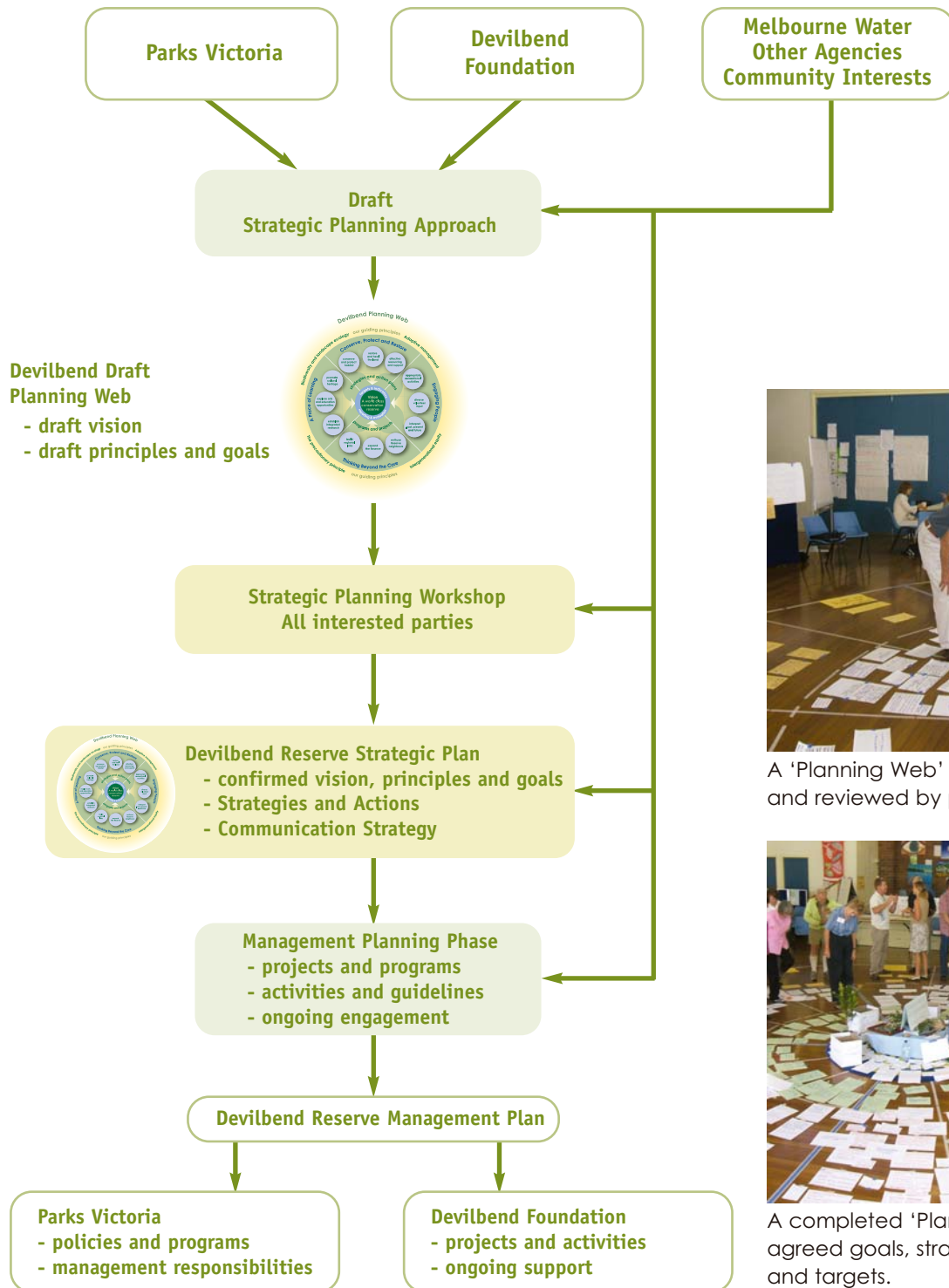
A number of positive partnerships and alliances are already involved in the future of Devilbend Reserve. The *Devilbend Foundation* is keen to see opportunities broadened to collectively support conservation work and integrated research, identify and pool resources and funds, and promote appropriate use of the reserve by the public. This will involve community groups, neighbours, local people, scientists, educational institutions, local, state and federal government and other organisations. A key underlying partnership is between Parks Victoria and the community.



Developing a management plan

The proposed Devilbend Reserve long-term strategic plan will provide the framework for future actions and the direction for more immediate management planning. A detailed management plan needs to be prepared, encompassing the strategies and actions, projects and approach outlined in the strategic plan.

The management plan will also establish policies, guidelines, programs and day-to-day operational requirements and responsibilities necessary to manage Devilbend Reserve in a manner that helps achieve the community vision and establishes best-practice nature conservation.



A 'Planning Web' being created and reviewed by participants.



A completed 'Planning Web' with agreed goals, strategies, actions and targets.

Proposed Devilbend Strategic Planning Approach

The diagram above outlines the general approach proposed to establish cooperative management of Devilbend Reserve. This approach includes transitional arrangements involved in initially establishing the Reserve, the strategic planning process, preparation of a Devilbend Reserve management plan, and ongoing community engagement.

THE STRATEGIC PLANNING WEB

Aim

The aim of developing a strategic plan is to provide a framework and focus for agreed actions and activities related to Devilbend Reserve. This plan can provide the opportunity to combine the wide range of skills, experience resources and interests available into a common approach for the future. Actions originating from a range of sources can be implemented in an integrated and coordinated manner, with many tasks carried out simultaneously and progressively. The plan's strategies, actions and priorities can be reviews and adjusted based on shared progress and the challenges faced.

The proposed strategic planning approach for Devilbend Reserve is based on an innovative planning process called the *Planning Web*. This planning tool enables a range of different cultural, social, economic, as well as ecological goals and their strategies to be combined together effectively, to achieve the overarching vision of Devilbend as a world-class conservation reserve. The Devilbend Foundation believe it is eminently suitable as it involves all the key players and interested parties.

The Planning Web Model

The *Planning Web* tool enables a range of stakeholders to create an integrated strategic plan based on shared values and both common and different interests. In the *Planning Web* the vision forms the central focus of the framework. Key goals related to achieving the vision create anchor-points and establish pathways towards the vision involving suitable strategies and actions. Integrating these helps to weave the Web. Themes or Key Outcome Areas can also be established to cluster similar types of goals.

Targets and priorities can be set, partnerships developed and performance indicators established to implement strategic actions and assess progress. These levels lie closest to the vision to ensure they are realistic and help create a practical web.

Guiding principles are also adopted, eg., 'The Precautionary Principle', to incorporate into all actions, helping to maintain a strong Web.



The Devilbend Planning Web

The Devilbend Foundation has engaged the firm Sustainable Futures Australia (SFA) who created the Planning Web process to assist in developing a draft *Planning Web* for Devilbend Reserve. SFA have been successfully facilitating this process across Australia and internationally over the past decade, in a wide range of sustainability planning exercises.

What is the draft Web looking like so far?

The Community Vision for Devilbend Reserve has been placed into a draft *Devilbend Planning Web*, which is shown on the next page. A series of 12 Key Goals relating to this vision have been identified and placed in the outer strands and then linked together into four Key Outcome Areas (KOA's). Also four Guiding Principles have been established. This framework is proposed as the basis for working together to confirm our approach to managing Devilbend Reserve and to establish strategic actions and priorities in the next phase. The following pages of this booklet describe the guiding principles, the key outcome areas and the goals.

Next steps from here?

As shown in the proposed approach on page 5 it is recommended that a planning workshop using the *draft Devilbend Planning Web* be convened jointly by Park Victoria and Devilbend Foundation and a representative working group would be established to create the draft strategic plan for review and finalisation after the planning workshop. The process would enable a wide range of people to work together to create strategies and integrated action plans based on the goals, using the draft Planning Web as the core tool.



Based on The Planning Web
© P. Cuming 1996.

OUR VISION

Create a world-class conservation reserve for future generations, achieved through:

- restoration over time of all Devilbend Reserve land towards its original values
- a cultural learning process reconnecting people with nature and with one another
- working together in positive and effective partnerships and alliances



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

A number of key sustainability principles have been identified as vital in guiding future planning, decision-making, and activities if we are to protect Devilbend Reserve's natural and cultural values, and achieve the Community Vision. These principles include: supporting the regenerative power of Nature, adapting our approach over time from lessons learnt, being careful in what we do on the Devilbend Reserve, and maintaining it for future generations. By adopting and applying these principles we support a long-term commitment to best-practice management for the Reserve.

Landscape Ecology

The rapidly developing science of Landscape Ecology has shown that the existence of large, 'landscape scale', areas or patches of habitat is vital for the long-term viability of a diverse ecosystem. New approaches to restoration of vegetation are emerging from worldwide as well as local research showing that cleared land is capable of regeneration and restoration. Expanding habitat areas by giving priority to locations that provide strong habitat links is a key principle to be adopted in Reserve management. Practical and efficient techniques of restoration will be developed in the years to come that will assist in making this a reality.



Adaptive Management

Devilbend Reserve's long-term management strategy and management plan need to be 'living documents'. This means they are regularly reviewed and amended to meet identified and emerging challenges, and new findings and ideas that come from research and practice. We may need to adjust priorities and approaches based on opportunities and barriers we come across for example, to take advantage of access to funding and resources. 'Adaptive management' is a key principle to adopt when embarking on an ongoing journey that requires effective and timely responses to the changes and learning that each step brings.

Intergenerational Equity

This universally acknowledged principle requires us to consider the interests of both present and future generations in relation to our actions now. It is important that protection and management of Devilbend Reserve values reflect and engage the interests of young and older generations in the present. As well, our present decisions and actions should seek to improve Devilbend Reserve's environmental and cultural values, or at the very least maintain existing values, for future generations.



The Precautionary Principle

We are unlikely to always have the information we need to make decisions to protect the environment, so we must proceed with caution. We must act to prevent impacts, particularly where there is potential for serious or irreversible damage to occur. A lack of scientific certainty or information should not delay these actions. The Precautionary Principle needs to be applied from the outset in working towards restoration of Devilbend Reserve as an intact haven for wildlife. Proposed activities must be considered in relation to their potential environmental consequences in this regard. Applying an anticipatory approach, based on local to global experience, can avoid past mistakes and help choose appropriate responses to proposals and management challenges.

KEY OUTCOMES

The Community Vision involves achieving four key outcomes, singularly and together. The outcomes reflect the direction to be taken into the future and key themes of the approach. A series of key goals have been identified to help move in this direction and achieve these outcomes.

The primary outcome of protecting and restoring Devilbend Reserve depends on successfully engaging people working cooperatively and gaining a greater understanding of how natural systems work. It depends on thinking beyond the core reserve area, involving neighbours and looking at the Reserve in a regional context. Devilbend Reserve will be a place of learning and enjoying appropriate recreational and cultural activities. Focusing on these outcomes together are the key to achieving the Community Vision

Conserve, Protect and Restore

The Victorian government's Devilbend Working Group 2004 Summary Report identified the existing high flora and fauna values of the site. These values must be protected. They provide the basis for a long-term conservation program involving regeneration of cleared areas over time to gradually reconnect the existing bushland fragments. A key outcome will be restoration of the whole Reserve into an outstanding system of varied habitat and reinvigorated faunal populations.



Australasian Bittern. Photo courtesy of NSW NPWS.



Engaging People

The involvement of a wide range of people and combining their ideas, experience, resources and energy is vital to the success of Devilbend Reserve and its link to the wider story of nature conservation on the Mornington Peninsula. This includes engaging local people and importantly neighbours, community organisations, the Shire Council, relevant government agencies, schools and universities, and others interested in the Devilbend Reserve's conservation. Building capacity, awareness, and cooperation will be key drivers of this approach.

A Place of Learning

Devilbend Reserve will become the focus for learning, reconnecting people with nature and with one another. This includes educational programs, people enjoying the Reserve for passive recreation, engaging in creative arts related to the Reserve's values, and participating in its care and restoration. The Devilbend land is, and has always been, an important site for the Bunurong People, the traditional owners, and this association needs to be fostered and better understood by the wider community.



Australasian Bittern.



Thinking Beyond The Core

Devilbend Reserve is a focus for a wider task of restoring and strengthening the robustness of nature on the Peninsula. There is a wide range of social, recreational, economic and environmental benefits from this approach. This includes opportunities to promote the Peninsula and the world-class conservation activities going on. We need to engage with Reserve neighbours to develop compatible land management. We should look to expand the core reserve area where it is possible and appropriate. We need to build regional links to and from the Devilbend Reserve in an integrated way with other land uses across the regional landscape.

CONSERVE, PROTECT AND RESTORE THE RESERVE

Aim:

The intention is to re-establish, over time, a large, intact landscape of native vegetation providing a robust sustainable core area of quality habitat for a range of wildlife of the Peninsula.

Key Goals:

Conserve and protect habitat and fauna

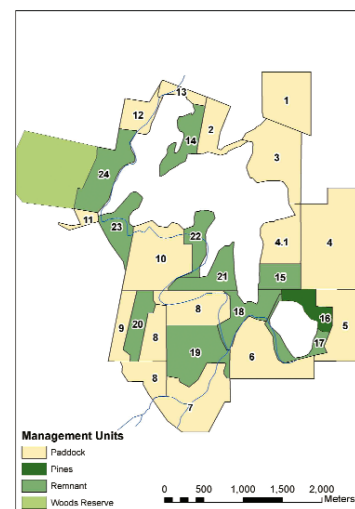
It is vital to protect what is presently in the Devilbend Reserve. This requires us to firstly know what is there, to help us decide how best to protect and restore the Reserve values. Activities such as conducting baseline studies on both terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems and creating good maps, inventories and plans are part of this approach.

Policy and guidelines need to be established including those that apply the Precautionary Principle for proposed activities that may threaten existing or future restored natural systems. Weed and feral animal control as well as other protective programs and infrastructure need to be implemented.



Restore and heal the land

An inter-generational plan needs to be established to connect the existing fragments of habitat by progressively initiating intensive restoration on each cleared or degraded block. For example a 50-year program of 5 year work intervals, including review, would offer an approach and pace with a number of advantages. These include (1) promoting natural healing of the land with supportive and responsive care (2) matching strategic priorities to available resources, and (3) adopting new and adjusted techniques and approaches based on reflection, experience and innovation.



Effective resourcing and support

Successful restoration requires an integrated approach to the funding and resourcing of Devilbend Reserve management actions. A financial plan is required, combining recurrent and opportunistic funds and in-kind contributions from different levels of government, institutions, organisations and the wider community. Within this approach continuation of existing land-use leases provides a significant stream of income, albeit reducing over time based on prioritised restoration of the Reserve. Supplementary income can be sourced through the Devilbend Foundation from federal funding, philanthropic institutions, and sources indirectly related to the environment eg. arts and education sectors. The Foundation will also encourage and channel a variety of human resources and 'in-kind' support from the community into Reserve management actions and programs.



ENGAGING PEOPLE

Aim:

The intention is to provide a range of opportunities to involve the public in research, management, restoration, appropriate use, and promotion of the Devilbend Reserve, including refreshing passive recreation activities.

Key Goals:

Create appropriate recreational activities

Local residents and visitors will be able to reconnect with nature and share this together through a range of appropriate recreational activities that minimise the impact of infrastructure and human activity on the Devilbend Reserve. These type of activities include walking, jogging, bird-watching, and in suitable locations, picnicking as it has been enjoyed for generations. An equestrian trail, carefully sited on the perimeter to avoid environmental impacts, is anticipated as a possibility.

All proposals for recreational activities will need to be considered in terms of their likely or known impacts on Devilbend Reserve and with the Precautionary Principle in mind.



Mobilise diverse volunteer inputs

It is proposed to involve and stimulate supporters of the Devilbend Reserve beyond the usual 'Friends' work of weeding and rehabilitation planting. This includes contributing their knowledge and skills to the challenge of planning, recording, assessment and management tasks involved in collaboration with *Parks Victoria*.

The Devilbend Foundation aims to encourage, organise and facilitate all of these inputs. Developing and maintaining a register of volunteer resources and skills linked to the strategic actions and management plan for Devilbend Reserve will be a useful tool for the work ahead.



Interpret the past, present and future

Creative and informative Interpretive signage, exhibits and support materials will enable all visitors to understand and be enriched by the diverse historical, environmental and cultural features of the Reserve and the Peninsula. This will enliven the need for, and the growth of, ongoing research and outreach programs related to these values. Activities related to Devilbend's past, present and future may include cultural events, art and other forms of expression, and engage community, schools, performers, scientists and designers. The strategic plan creates an opportunity to establish a preferred future for Devilbend Reserve. The ongoing review of management actions provides a chance to look at what is happening and changing. Recording the path of Devilbend Reserve's restoration will be a story in itself, a journey linking generations.



THINKING BEYOND THE CORE

Aim:

Devilbend Reserve will become an especially rich 'core' from which conservation values can spread into the Peninsula ecosystems. Enlargement of the Reserve, creating corridor links to remote patches of habitat, and sympathetic land management on adjacent and nearby properties can magnify the protection of biodiversity throughout a far wider area.

Key Goals:

Enthuse Reserve neighbours

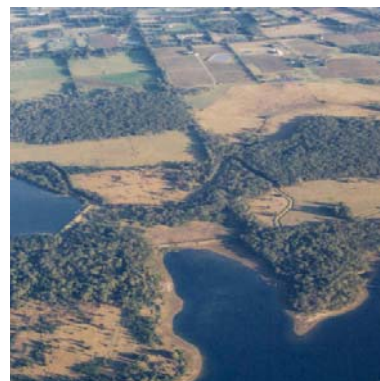
Enriching the habitat on surrounding properties would help strengthen the core values of Devilbend Reserve and provide enhanced habitat opportunities for many fauna species. Thoughtful practices by neighbours, such as control of weeds and feral animals, avoidance of inappropriate activities, and qualifying for 'Land for Wildlife' status will all assist in this regard.

The formation of Landcare groups, developing cooperative management agreements, establishing suitable covenants, and ongoing education activities are actions that should be employed in this regard.



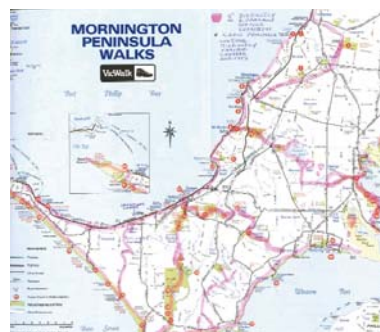
Expand the core

MacArthur and Wilson's groundbreaking 'Theory of Island Biogeography' 1967 states that large islands of habitat protect more species than small islands. Any enlargement of the Devilbend Reserve is beneficial. Opportunities should be sought out to acquire adjacent land, especially good quality wooded blocks. The 40 ha site still planned for sale should be retained with the Reserve, as it offers not only buffering but also a valuable base on which to develop essential people oriented educational, research and recreational activities. The 'inlying' properties at the northern end should be considered if they become available. An obvious priority would be to liaise with Mornington Peninsula Shire in relation to the adjoining Woods Reserve. The view would be to harmonise management and the possibility of being included in Devilbend Reserve at the appropriate time.



Build regional links

The late Stefanie Rennick set the pattern with her successful *Two Bays Walking Trail*, and suggestions for many others on and across the Peninsula (marked in pink by her on the map shown here). Devilbend Reserve is an ideal nucleus from which a web of low-key walking trails and habitat corridors can radiate to connect quality bushland for native fauna and humans alike. Roadside and creek-line reserves and pipeline easements are good starting points. Links across the northern Peninsula from bay to bay are a feasible first priority, and provide an exciting prospect.



A PLACE OF LEARNING

Aim:

The intention is to increase knowledge and awareness of the ecological, cultural and spiritual values of the natural environment and its processes, through activities focused on and associated with Devilbend Reserve.

Key Goals:

Establish integrated research

The proposed long-term program of rehabilitation offers a significant opportunity for integrated research into the science and practice of restoring natural systems and applying landscape ecology principles. The ongoing 30 month bird monitoring study carried out by Birds Australia to date has collected a wealth of information already.

Individuals and institutions are indicating their enthusiasm to set up and participate in research programs. Some important early projects will involve carrying out baseline studies related to existing systems, for example aquatic systems as proposed by Monash University. This research will provide the basis for management actions and support continuous improvement in adaptive management practices.



Explore education and arts opportunities

Devilbend Reserve has already become a focus of study for secondary, undergraduate and post-graduate assignments, and this interest will increase significantly with the establishment of the Reserve. Watching changes occurring in the natural systems of the land, and people's relationships with, it offers many opportunities for learning, formally and informally. The visual and performing arts community have already gained inspiration from, and presented images of, Devilbend Reserve very effectively. They will contribute significantly to continuing environmental education and promoting awareness of Reserve values. In return Devilbend Reserve provides inspiration to the community helping to enrich our way of life.



Promote cultural heritage

The Devilbend Reserve land has always held significance for the Bunurong People of the area. Engagement and participation by their representatives in restoration of the land, and in other associated activities, is highly valued and will be strongly supported. Opportunity and facilities will be developed to support research and display historical and cultural information and artifacts related to indigenous and early European settlers, to demonstrate and promote awareness of their history, cultures and ways of life.



WORKING TOGETHER TO MAKE IT HAPPEN

A key to the success of achieving the Community Vision and common goals is to develop effective ways to work together to make it happen. This involves establishing good communication, including protocols for sharing information and for developing and implementing agreements. The Devilbend Foundation sees a positive and cooperative relationship being developed with Parks Victoria to help create the strategic plan and the follow-up detailed management planning.

Numerous initial matters relevant to establishing the Devilbend Reserve need to be addressed and require ongoing discussion between the Foundation, Parks Victoria and others. These include:

- liaising with aspiring reserve 'users' to define points of agreement and difference and to develop responses
- reviewing studies and holding workshops on the best approach to restoration, weed management, application of landscape ecology principles and so on
- identifying native bird and animal habitat requirements to assist in Reserve restoration and management
- establishing baseline studies on existing levels of flora and fauna, present connectivity and edges of the Reserve, to support cooperative efforts and chart progress over time in restoring the Reserve
- establishing appropriate public access, fencing, walk-trails, and interim management guidelines, as well as on-ground management presence
- creating an initial information brochure for the community and implementing initial Reserve signage.



Working on the ground ...

A range of fieldwork will require, and in some cases rely on, ongoing cooperative effort. This includes actions such as:

- continuing the *Birds Australia* bird monitoring
- initiating other surveys, including native seed sources, aquatic studies, and mapping weeds
- commencing 'easy' restoration trials aimed at both comparative studies and demonstration
- identifying effective volunteer programs, and
- establishing appropriate public access as soon as possible
- policing adverse activities such as rubbish dumping.

Working on the support structure ...

A range of actions is needed to support a strong cooperative approach. These include:

- regular coordination meetings between Parks Victoria and the Devilbend Foundation
- setting up a composite research coordination committee
- establishing a broadly based volunteer group
- creating a fundraising committee to generate funds and resources that can be directed towards agreed Reserve programs and actions.



For more information and to get involved ...

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NEXT STEPS

The Devlbend Foundation sees the following four key steps in this initial phase of establishing Devlbend Reserve:

- Maintain community liaison
- Build a strong strategic plan
- Identify how to work together
- Carry out initial actions

Maintain community liaison

It is important to continue effective liaison between community groups that have worked together to establish Devlbend Reserve and who support the Devlbend Foundation's work. It is vital to engage local and regional community groups, neighbouring landowners, Council and other people interested in Devlbend in the planning work ahead. This will assist in gathering diverse views and identifying key issues and challenges that need to be addressed. Holding a major strategic planning workshop with all interested parties, based on the draft Devlbend Planning Web, will strengthen this liaison, a range of conversations and varied input.

Build a strong strategic plan

The proposed workshop involving Parks Victoria, community and other key stakeholders will help set the tone and parameters for Reserve use and its cooperative care. An inter-generational management approach will be developed supporting the transition from a present fragmented mosaic of paddocks and bush to an integrated continuum of effective habitat. This planning workshop will help create inclusive solutions and build a strong strategic plan including programs, projects and action plans based on a shared vision, guiding principles and key goals. This strategic plan will also guide the preparation of a more detailed Reserve management plan.

Identify how to work together

In developing the strategic plan we need to identify the partnerships, and individual and collective efforts required to implement necessary programs and achieve key actions. This requires good communication, agreed protocols and a clear understanding of our roles and responsibilities. We need to coordinate our actions to best effect, including the allocation of tasks flowing from the strategic plan. Ongoing discussion between key stakeholders and interested people will build a shared understanding of the Reserve, and help establish effective agreements to facilitate the work ahead.

Carry out initial actions

A range of management actions can be commenced immediately, and would assist in engaging interested groups and individuals who are keen to get involved. These actions will be part of the strategic plan and their early implementation can both help develop and promote the planning process. These actions include starting work on the first restoration paddock, and on small comparative restoration trials, as well as establishing a pilot education program with schools. It also includes setting up an initial Devlbend Foundation operations centre, commencing fundraising and establishing a resources database. Preparing and disseminating initial information on the Devlbend Reserve to the wider community will also be informative and beneficial.

An important step on the journey...

This pamphlet sets out the proposed approach to the challenges ahead of creating and maintaining a world-class conservation reserve. We encourage and look forward to you joining with us, and others, in this exciting and worthy journey!!



... working together protecting our heritage for future generations ...



Acknowledgments

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