



Media Release

Roadside Forum To Show The Way

13 July 2018

Buloke Shire Council hosted surrounding Councils and lead agencies at a Roadside Management Forum in Wycheproof this week.

The forum was put together to find a better way forward for the management of roadsides and the balancing of the various safety and biodiversity responsibilities.

Joining Buloke Shire in attendance were representatives from Mildura Rural City Council, Swan Hill Rural City Council, Gannawarra Shire Council, Loddon Shire Council, Northern Grampians Shire Council, Yarriambiack Shire Council, Country Fire Authority (CFA), Municipal Association of Victoria, VicRoads, Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF), Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) and Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (DEDJTR).

The agenda was devised to be a conversation starter for the lead agencies to listen to each other's priorities and approaches when it comes to roadsides.

Fiona Murdoch, the Natural Environment Program Officer for DELWP, was the perfect starting point for the presentation phase of the forum and outlined the requirements to be met under legislation.

Inka Helheim (Senior Environmental Officer, VicRoads), David Allen (Manager Community Safety, Fire Management, CFA) and Lisa Gervasoni (Policy Manager, VFF) also addressed the forum on their organisations priorities and procedures.

These presentations set the scene for some robust round table discussion to explore the competing priorities and other relevant issues. Some of the common themes coming through were fire breaks, road safety, the accommodation of oversized machinery, changing cropping practises and their implications as well as better alignment between agencies.

Buloke Shire Mayor, Cr David Pollard was impressed by the level of discussion and engagement.

"The forum was a terrific starting point for our Councils to work with all agencies in relation to better and clearer management of roadsides. The farming world is evolving quickly and a lot of roads were built early last century and are not equipped to handle the changes".

"Roadsides represent a delicate environmental ecosystem and animal thoroughfare, so there are a lot of competing interests in play, as well as finding suitable solutions for landholders. If we can all pull in the same direction we can advocate more strategically for funding as well as write better policy and deliver better outcomes.", he added.

All groups present were in favour of forming a working group and will look to meet again within the next six weeks.

End release

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