



# THE GREAT OCEAN ROAD COAST COMMITTEE

Annual Report 2012-2013







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A man and a woman are walking through a wooded area. The woman is on the left, wearing a blue and white striped long-sleeved shirt and a long necklace of white circular beads. The man is on the right, wearing a light grey polo shirt and dark shorts. They are both looking towards the camera. The background is filled with green foliage and trees.

OUR VISION IS TO

PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE  
BREATHTAKING AND ICONIC  
COASTLINE WITH ITS DIVERSE  
COMMUNITY, NATURAL  
ENVIRONMENT AND RICH SOCIAL  
AND CULTURAL HISTORY AS  
CUSTODIANS FOR CURRENT  
AND FUTURE GENERATIONS.



# FROM THE CHAIRMAN AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

We have great pride in presenting a report which outlines a number of significant achievements for the Great Ocean Road Coast Committee over 2012-2013.

The organisation has been reaching new standards in strategic planning. Our Coastal Management Plan, which was developed via a collaborative process which included extensive consultation with stakeholders, has set our strategic direction for the next five years. We are pleased to announce the completion and final, Ministerial approval of this key, overarching plan and excited to begin its implementation which will commence in July this year.

Importantly, the CMP identifies four significant, high level challenges facing the coast and outlines GORCC's strategic responses to each issue. Climate change, population and development, protection of the natural environment and financial and other resources are the key challenges we face as we move into the future.

While our role in direct management of some of these challenges is limited, we must manage their impacts and continue to act as an advocate for the coast, working with others wherever possible.

We have also announced the completion of a range of special projects over the last twelve months, including the Surf Coast Walk, the Natural Values project and many more. Outstanding, vital environmental and education programs are also continuing – an area in which our organisation continues to excel.

Our financial performance continues to strengthen with more funds available for investment into both the coast and our caravan parks. In 2012-2013 almost \$2.9 million was spent on special and capital projects and invested almost \$5 million invested into the coast and our caravan parks.



We acknowledge the support of our many partners and the wider community in bringing these exciting projects to fruition and look forward to working collaboratively with them again in 2013-2014.

Recognition must be given to our volunteer committee members and our hardworking staff. We thank you for dedication and achievements over the year.

Together, we look forward to an exciting year ahead that will no doubt be filled with opportunities, achievements and challenges.

**Chairman John Carlile**

**Chief Executive Officer Richard Davies**

# ABOUT US

## Role

The Great Ocean Road Coast Committee (GORCC) is a Committee of Management formed by the Victorian Government in 2004. GORCC is a not-for-profit, community based organisation responsible for managing Crown land reserves along the heritage listed Great Ocean Road in Victoria.

## Structure

The committee members of GORCC are appointed under the Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978 for a term of three years by the Minister for Environment and Climate Change. Committee members are selected through a public, skills-based 'expression of interest' process. GORCC also has around 30 full time staff.

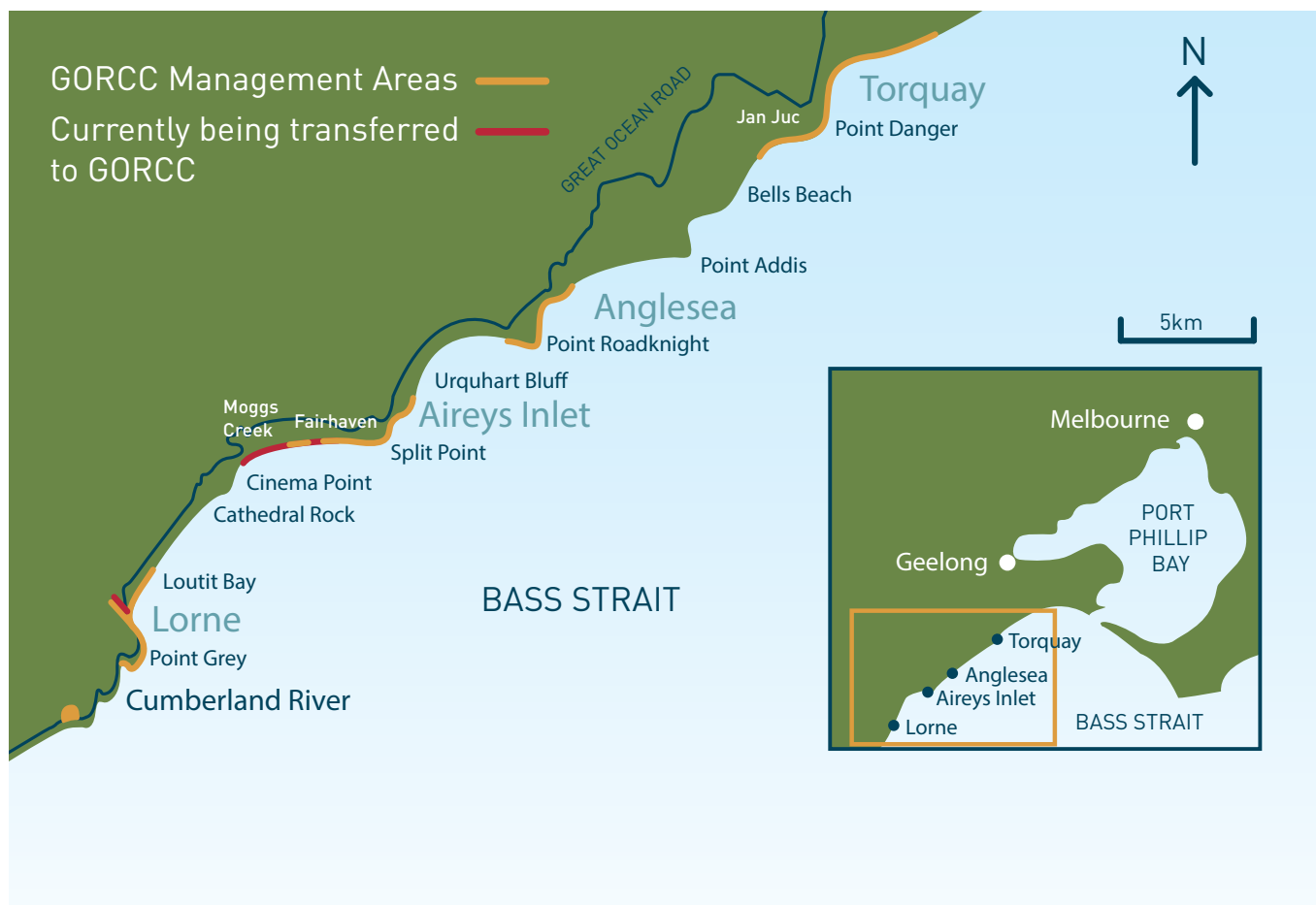
## Funding

GORCC currently generates around \$5 million in direct revenue annually, with 80 per cent coming from the two directly managed caravan parks in Torquay and Lorne. Other income is derived from a range of sources including lease, licence and permit fees. Revenue is often supplemented by grants which are used for special projects.

## Management area

GORCC manages 37 kilometres of Crown land reserves along the coast from Point Impossible east of Torquay, to the Cumberland River southwest of Lorne. Map 1 below provides an overview of the areas managed by GORCC.

Map 1: The GORCC managed coast





OUR MISSION IS TO  
ENSURE APPROPRIATE  
USE AND EFFECTIVE  
MANAGEMENT OF THE  
GORCC MANAGED COAST  
THROUGH ADVOCACY  
AND ACTION

*Local students and volunteers work with GORCC and the Marine Discovery Centre as part of a sand dunes program conducted every year in Torquay.*

## Guiding principles

### GORCC believes that:

1. The natural environment is the prime value of the GORCC managed coast and its protection and enhancement is of the highest priority.
2. The GORCC managed coast has very strong community, heritage and traditional values which must be protected and enhanced.
3. The coast's significant economic values provide opportunities to generate resources to support the protection and enhancement of its natural, community, heritage and traditional values.
4. The GORCC managed coast should be managed in a transparent and collaborative way on behalf of and in partnership with all stakeholders, with the general community being our main 'client'.
5. The GORCC managed coast should remain accessible and affordable for the general community to participate in a range of passive and active recreational pursuits.
6. Fostering stewardship and volunteerism on the coast by improving awareness and understanding amongst stakeholders is integral to its long term sustainability.
7. GORCC's decisions and actions should be directed by plans, strategies and other business and planning tools that have been developed in consultation with stakeholders and using rigorous information and data.
8. GORCC will be pro-active and take a lead role in promoting and facilitating the best outcomes for the coast, including advocating and lobbying others on broader issues beyond GORCC's direct responsibilities.
9. Good governance, prudential management, organisation and structural arrangements and appropriate human and other resources are essential to ensuring GORCC operates in an effective, ethical and compliant manner.



# STRATEGIC PLANNING

## The Coastal Management Plan

GORCC's Coastal Management Plan, a five year management plan for 37km of coast along the Great Ocean Road, was approved by the Minister for Environment and Climate Change Ryan Smith in April 2013.

The plan, which is now in its implementation phase:

- Identifies management priorities.
- Provides direction for the sustainable management of the GORCC coast .
- Was developed via an open, comprehensive and collaborative process.



*Community members have input into the development of the CMP at a workshop held in Lorne in January 2012.*



An aerial photograph of a coastal landscape. In the foreground, there is a dense, green, scrubby hillside. A sandy beach runs along the coastline, with waves breaking onto it. The ocean is a deep blue, and the sky is clear. In the background, there are more hills and a small body of water. A small, dark, rectangular structure is visible on the right side of the image, near the beach.

THE CMP'S DEVELOPMENT  
PROCESS INCLUDED  
EXTENSIVE CONSULTATION  
WITH STAKEHOLDERS. ALMOST  
200 COMMUNITY MEMBERS  
AND MANY GROUPS AND  
ORGANISATIONS HAD INPUT  
INTO THE DEVELOPMENT OF  
THE PLAN.



# NATURAL ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION

## Natural Values Project

The largest single biodiversity conservation project ever conducted along the Great Ocean Road is now complete. The project, which was part of a \$1.35 million program funded by the Federal Government, was led by GORCC's skilled conservation team. Outcomes include:

- Overall reduction in noxious weeds
- 35,000 new indigenous plants planted
- Major weed removal works over 110 ha of coast
- Intensive rehabilitation over more than 3.5 ha of coast
- Extensive volunteer group support, including more than \$50,000 worth of free equipment time

THE LARGEST SINGLE BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION PROJECT EVER CONDUCTED ALONG THE GREAT OCEAN ROAD IS NOW COMPLETE.



*GORCC Conservation Officer Georgie Beale working at Spring Creek Torquay.*

## Coastal Tender Project

In 2012 GORCC secured \$629,000 for the conservation and rehabilitation of 13 significant sites covering 177 hectares between Point Impossible and Lorne.

Work is underway and results to date include:

- Majority of woody weeds cleared
- Thousands of indigenous plants planted
- Extension of threatened coastal moonah woodland and heathland habitat
- Extensive environmental volunteer group support

## Hooded Plover Protection

GORCC works with partners to protect the threatened Hooded Plover.

### **GORCC's work includes:**

- Helping to coordinate Hooded Plover Volunteer Monitors
- Installing educational signs and protective fencing
- Carrying out regular beach patrols



*GORCC Conservation Officer Georgie Beale with Mike Weston from Deakin University releasing a Hooded Plover.*



# INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES

## The Surf Coast Walk

The Surf Coast Walk is officially open following a three year, \$1.35 million redevelopment resulting in a 44km, world class track along the Great Ocean Road. Olympic medallist walker Jared Tallent took the first steps on the officially opened track. The walk:

- Can be explored on foot or by bike
- Has become one of the region's peak attractions; some sections of track are averaging up to 784 users per day
- Was jointly funded by GORCC, Regional Development Victoria (RDV) and the Surf Coast Shire (SCS) and supported by Parks Victoria (PV)

## Torquay Bowls Club Redevelopment

Major works to redevelop the Torquay Bowling Club (TBC) are underway. The redevelopment will accommodate expanding membership and increasing community use and provide a home for the Torquay RSL Sub-branch.

The project is funded by a \$1.5 million State Government grant and is expected to be completed in early 2014. GORCC is the auspicing body for the grant on behalf of the TBC.



*A jogger and a bike rider enjoy the newly redeveloped Surf Coast Walk.*

## Point Grey Precinct Plan

GORCC is undertaking a planning process to identify a suitable option for the future use and development of the Point Grey precinct in Lorne. The planning process includes extensive consultation with key stakeholders and the broader community.

## Lorne Swing Bridge

GORCC is undertaking remedial work to restore the foundations, deck and handrails of the iconic Lorne Swing Bridge. GORCC is working to ensure the structure is preserved for the enjoyment of future generations and aiming to re-open the bridge by peak season 2013.



*L to R: Member for South Barwon Andrew Katos, GORCC CEO Richard Davies and TBC Chairman Des Bruhn outside the existing TBC.*



*The Point Grey Precinct in Lorne - View from the Pier.*

THE SURF COAST WALK PUTS A STUNNING, UNIQUE COASTAL ENVIRONMENT WITHIN EASY REACH.

# EDUCATION

## Education Activities Program

GORCC offers a range of free on-ground and theory based activities for schools and groups. Topics covered range from coastal management through to dune ecology. GORCC works with a range of partners to deliver the program. Participants so far have included:

- 26 different groups
- 1000 individual participants
- Primary, secondary, kindergarten, adult, special needs groups and many others

## Coast Guardians Program

Four schools have taken ownership of the rehabilitation and conservation of a coastal site. Year 9 students from each school:

- Develop a sense of environmental ownership and social responsibility
- Become coastal ambassadors
- Work with a range of community and volunteer groups and businesses
- Come together at the end of year 'Schools Forum' to learn, share experiences and celebrate achievements



*'Coast Guardians' participate in a cleanup activity in Torquay.*

## Camper Activities

Fun, free, educational activities are offered in GORCC managed caravan parks over peak periods. There's something for all ages with activities ranging from 'rockpool rambles' to kite making

## Other initiatives

GORCC also offers:

- Fun, downloadable educational activities for all ages
- Online educational resources including videos, fact sheets, blogs and more
- Interactive environmental education stalls at local events such as the Torquay Nightjar Markets and the ANGAI Wildflower Show



*Geelong Lutheran College Students participate in the 'Coast Guardians' Program on their site at Whites Beach Torquay.*

GORCC OFFERS A RANGE OF FREE ON-GROUND AND THEORY BASED ACTIVITIES FOR SCHOOLS AND GROUPS.



# CARAVAN PARK MANAGEMENT AND OPERATION

## A year of investment

An \$800,000 electrical upgrade to the Torquay Foreshore Caravan Park (TFCP) was completed in 2012. The work delivered safer and more reliable services to thousands of campers and has provided 300 sites with:

- New power heads
- Water supply

\$700,000 was also invested into the Lorne Foreshore Caravan Park (LFPC) over 2012-2013. Works undertaken included:

- Roadway upgrades.
- The complete rebuild of an amenity block.
- The refurbishment of three cabins resulting in new, boutique, river view accommodation.

## Looking to the future

Over the next financial year \$750,000 will be spent in the LFPC to upgrade:

- Amenities
- Infrastructure
- Cabins

\$150,000 will be spent in the TFCP on:

- A new playground.
- Improved roadways.

In addition, 11 new cabins will replace nine of the TFCP's ageing park units by November 2013.

11 NEW CABINS WILL  
REPLACE NINE OF THE  
TFCP'S AGEING PARK  
UNITS BY NOVEMBER 2013.



*The new, boutique Riverview Cabins at the Lorne Foreshore Caravan Park.*



DEVELOPMENT OF THE MANUAL  
INCLUDED A DETAILED AUDIT  
WHICH UNCOVERED A RANGE  
OF IMPORTANT AND PREVIOUSLY  
UNACKNOWLEDGED SITES.





# CULTURAL HERITAGE PROTECTION

## Aboriginal Heritage Conservation Manual

In 2012 GORCC completed an Aboriginal Heritage Conservation Manual for Crown land reserves between Torquay and Lorne. The manual:

- Provides a foundation for the protection and conservation of cultural values on the coast
- Was developed with the support and input of local indigenous groups
- Will guide work with traditional owners to bring cultural heritage to life through interpretation and cultural activities

Development of the manual included a detailed audit of indigenous sites which uncovered a range of important and previously unacknowledged sites.

## Indigenous Partnership Program

Thanks to \$30,000 in funding from the State Government, GORCC is working in partnership with the Wathaurung Aboriginal Corporation, the Wathaurung Aboriginal Cooperative and the Barwon Coast and Bellarine Bayside Committees of management on a project which will see:

- An Indigenous person trained to become an Indigenous Heritage Officer.
- The Indigenous Heritage Officer support partners in delivery of cultural awareness education programs.
- The development of an Indigenous Heritage Education resources package.

GORCC IS WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE WATHAURUNG ABORIGINAL CORPORATION, THE WATHAURUNG ABORIGINAL COOPERATIVE AND THE BARWON COAST AND BELLARINE BAYSIDE COMMITTEES OF MANAGEMENT ON AN INDIGENOUS PARTERSHIP PROJECT.



*GORCC staff member Nick Farrant, Wathaurung Aboriginal Corporation Chairperson Bryon Powell, EcoLogic's Sophie Small and GORCC staff member Trent Lake with examples of food and resources once commonly used by Indigenous people on the coast.*

# FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

In terms of normal trading operations for the year 2012-2013, net earnings prior to depreciation improved by 9% on the previous year. Net earnings after depreciation were lower due to an increased charge against assets derived from an asset revaluation conducted the previous year.

## Source of funds

The committee's total consolidated income was \$8.4 million (see graph 1). 63% of this income came from GORCC managed caravan parks in Torquay and Lorne, 17% from leases and licences and 16% from the State and Federal Governments (funding for special projects along the coast).

The committee were successful in obtaining the following grants for the year:

Aquatic Safety Signage Audit Review	\$35,000
Torquay Bowls Club Redevelopment	\$600,000
12th Ave Stairway Replacement	\$67,000
Coast Care Grants	\$10,080
Indigenous Cultural Awareness Program	\$24,385
Lorne Swing Bridge Upgrade	\$20,000
Coastal Risk Mitigation	\$24,500
Weed Control	\$1,455
Corangamite Catchment Authority	\$400,078
Pt Grey Re-Development Plan	\$15,000
Surfcoast Walk Redevelopment	\$150,000
	<hr/>
	\$1,347,498

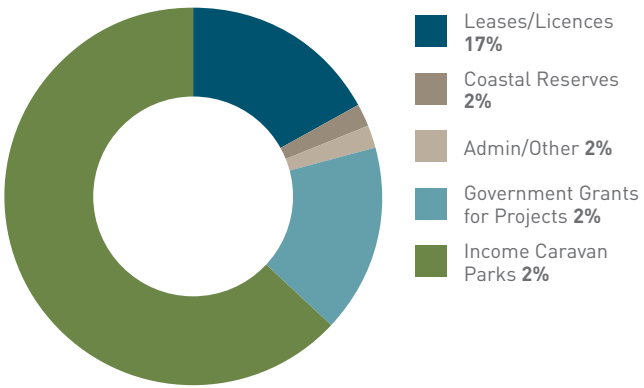
## Expenditure

Total expenditure for 2012/2013 was \$7.7 million. Almost equally shared between the committee's managed caravan parks at 46% and coastal reserves at 43%, with the remainder of 11% put towards administration (see Graph 2).

Total expenditure included \$2.9 million spent on capital and special projects which were either grant or non-grant related. Most spending went towards the non-grant related caravan park upgrades at 42% of the total capital funds spent (see graphs 3, 4 and 5).

The balance \$4.8 million related to costs incurred from normal business operations within Coastal Reserves, Caravan Parks and Administration (see graph 4).

Graph 1  
**Consolidated income including grants**  
Year 2012/2013  
Total = \$8.4 million



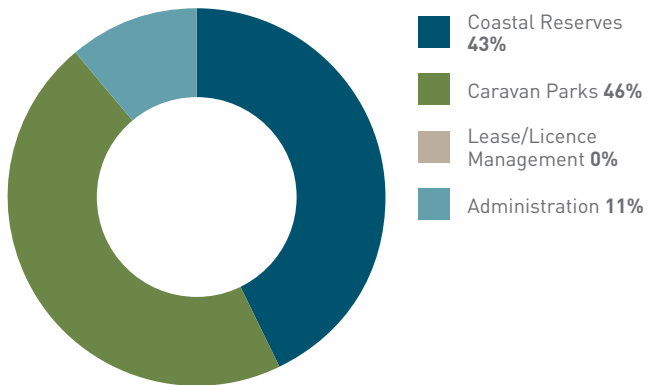


Graph 2

**Total expenditure**

Year 2013

\$7.7 million

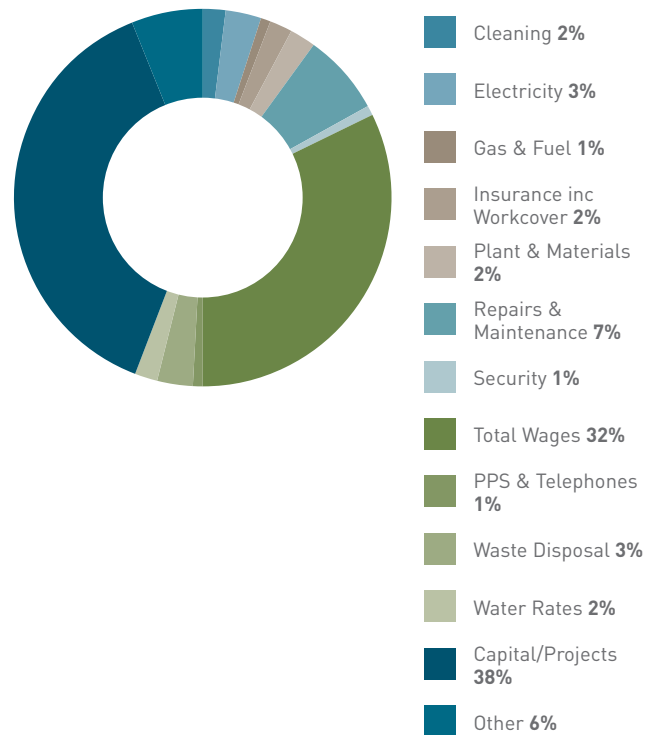


Graph 4

**Total consolidated expenditure**

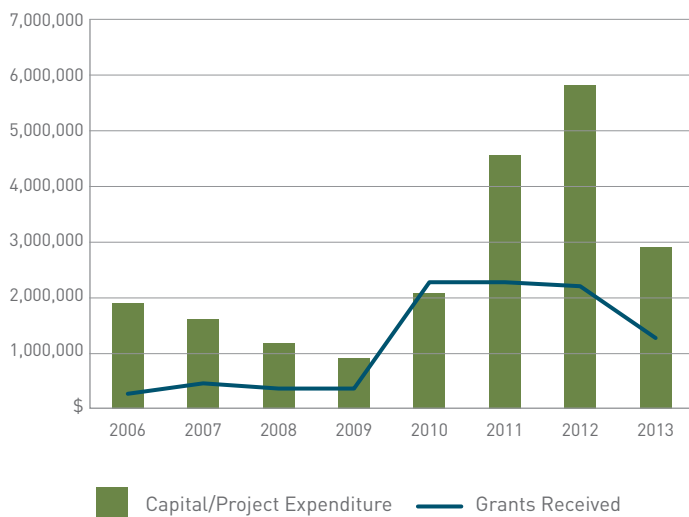
Year 2012/2013

Total = \$7.7 million



Graph 3

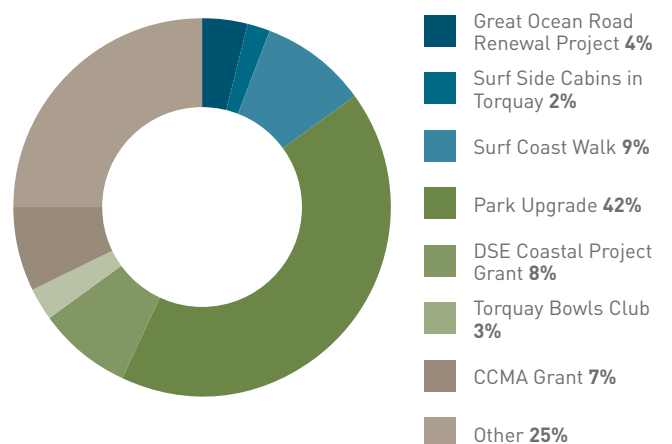
**Capital/Project activities**



Graph 5

**Total capital/project expenditure**

2012/2013 @ \$2.9 million



# COMMUNITY AND PARTNERSHIPS

## Partners

Much of our work in looking after the coast is undertaken in partnership with others.

### Some of these partners include:

- The Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI)
- SCS
- RDV
- PV
- The Corangamite Catchment Management Authority (CCMA)
- Other coastal committees of management
- Local and regional businesses
- Local community and volunteer organisations
- The Wathaurung Registered Aboriginal Party and other local indigenous groups
- The Western Coastal Board
- The Victorian Coastal Council
- Birdlife Australia

GORCC also thanks the various agencies that provide funding support to GORCC's special projects.

### Funding partners include:

- DEPI
- SCS
- RDV
- CCMA

## Annual coastal grants program

Each year, GORCC allocates \$10,000 to community and environmental activities with a coastal focus on areas under our management.

## Supporting our volunteers

Environmental volunteers contribute over 10,000 hours to looking after the coast we manage each year. GORCC works alongside and supports these groups by providing on ground assistance, tools, equipment, promotional support and more.

## Connecting with the community

GORCC works to build effective relationships with key stakeholders, the wider community and a range of partners. We utilise a variety of communication tools to inform, educate and engage with others.

We also offer opportunities for others to have input into major projects or decisions and undertake consultation in relation to a range of plans and projects.



*Volunteers at GORCC's official Clean Up Australia Day site in Jan Juc.*



*Young community members view ideas and concepts for the Point Grey Precinct in Lorne as part of the 'Open House' held on the foreshore in January 2013.*



GORCC ALSO OFFERS OPPORTUNITIES FOR OTHERS TO HAVE INPUT INTO MAJOR PROJECTS OR DECISIONS AND WE UNDERTAKE EXTENSIVE CONSULTATION PROCESSES IN RELATION TO A RANGE OF PLANS AND PROJECTS.





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